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ABSTRACT

This work consists of twenty reading selections, fiction and non-fiction. It is intended for use in grades 4 through 6 (9-12 year olds), and covers topics dealing with the history of the Chinese in America and contemporary Chinese American experience. These selections emphasize particularly the role the Chinese played in the development of the American West, giving examples of activities in transportation, agriculture, reclamation, fishing, and the provision of goods and services. The authors demonstrate, through the texts, that Chinese Americans are an integral part of a multi-ethnic, pluralistic American society. The selections take the form of personal experiences, more specifically relevant to Chinese living in California than to those residing elsewhere in the U.S. There is, however, present throughout, an emphasis upon social factors which helped to form the Chinese American experience in general. These factors include anti-Chinese legislation, the Angel Island detention, and changes in social and family structure caused by prejudice and discrimination. A group of questions follows each reading selection. These are designed both to measure understanding of the story and to encourage readers to project their own thoughts and feelings onto the experiences related. A teacher's guide to accompany this work is also available. (Author/GC)

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SEP 8 1977

CHINESE AMERICANS
PAST & PRESENT

A
Collection
of
Chinese American Readings
and
Learning Activities

BY
DON WONG
AND
IRENE DEA COLLIER

PRODUCED
BY
THE ASSOCIATION OF CHINESE TEACHERS
CHINESE AMERICAN HERITAGE PROJECT

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JUNE 1977

This book is dedicated to all the forgotten Chinese American heroes and heroines - past and present. Their achievements and struggles in America shall be remembered.

We wish to thank the following people for their help in making this book possible.

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INTRODUCTION

This book is about Chinese Americans whose achievements and struggles are hardly discussed in schools and textbooks. The reader will find stories about the experiences of Chinese in America from the late 1800 's to the present day. Some of the stories are true. Others are based on facts from Chinese American history. Some of them relate personal experiences in a colloquial format.

This book was written to provide students with meaningful reading materials about Chinese Americans. In the schools, there has been a shortage of reading materials about Chinese Americans. Some books create an image of Chinese Americans as foreigners and strangers in this country. This viewpoint is the result of past prejudice and ignorance. We have tried to present a honest and accurate picture of Chinese Americans. We wanted to show that Chinese Americans are an integral part of America's multi-ethnic and pluralistic society. Hopefully CHINESE AMERICANS , PAST AND PRESENT will encourage students to find out more about Chinese Americans.

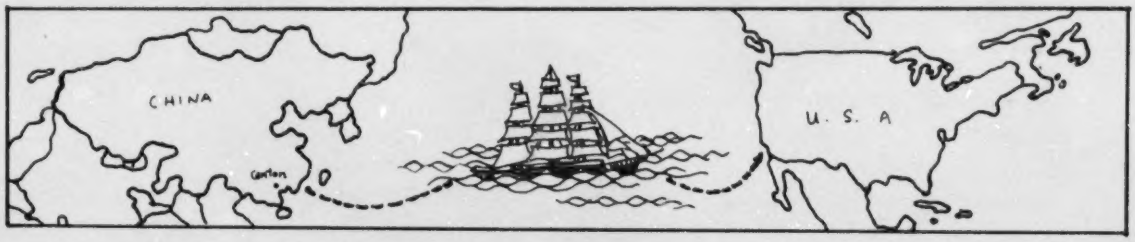
Don Wong
Irene Dea Collier

Why Did the Chinese Leave China ?

by Irene Dea Collier

Illustrated by Angela Chen

There are many Chinese living in countries around the world. How did they get there? Why did they leave China? Where did they go? From 1840 to 1900 almost 2½ million people left China. Some of them came to the United States.



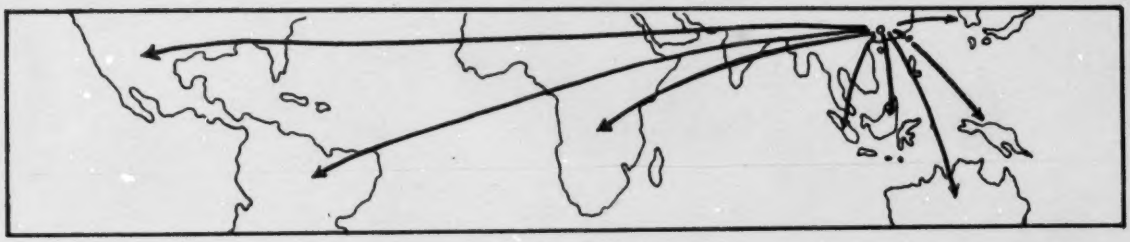
Why did the Chinese leave China? They left for the same reason that most people leave their homelands to go to new countries. They could no longer make a living at home. Some of the Chinese left to work for just a little while. Others left to settle in the new countries.

Most of these Chinese had been farmers in the Canton area. This part of southern China has some of the most crowded farmlands in the world. Not all the soil is good. In the 1800's there were years of too much rain, followed by years of not enough rain. The crops were bad and there wasn't enough food for all the people.

Not only were the crops bad, there was fighting all over China. The farmers fought with the soldiers. They fought with the Europeans who wanted to force China to trade with them. They even fought with each other. Sometimes, robbers would come to the villages and kill the farmers.

When gold was discovered in California in 1848, many people from Canton sailed for America to look for gold. Why did so many people from Canton leave? Why didn't Chinese from other parts of China also leave? One reason was that Canton had one of the oldest seaports in China. The people of Canton, called Cantonese, had a long history of sea travel. There were many Cantonese sailors, merchants and traders who had been going to new countries for a long time.

However, most Chinese did not leave China to find gold, but to find work. Because Canton had a seaport, there were many foreigners in Canton. Many of these foreigners had come to China to look for workers for their developing countries. Sometimes they made promises that were never kept. Among the many things that the foreigners promised were good working conditions, good pay and a safe voyage home. Because the foreigners only wanted to hire men, the women and children were left behind in the villages. Some countries let the women and children join the men later. Other countries did not.



The Chinese did not just go to the United States. They took jobs all over the world. Often, the Chinese were not treated well and many died in the new countries.

The Chinese did many things in these new countries. They built railroads, fished, worked on large farms, dug canals, built houses and filled swamps. Many of these jobs took strength, skill and courage. Men from China helped to build some of the richest countries in the world, but their names have been lost to history.

Today, the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of these men live all over the world as a result of this migration.* They live in many different countries on almost every continent of the globe.

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* *Migration--people moving from one place to another in large numbers.*

QUESTIONS

1. Most of the Chinese who left China were
   a. farmers from Canton.
   b. fishermen from Shanghai.
   c. merchants from Peking.

2. The Chinese left China because
   a. there was not enough food for everyone.
   b. they could not find work at home.
   c. there were many wars.
   d. all of the above.

3. Most of the Chinese left China when
   a. they heard there was gold in California.
   b. they could ride on faster ships.
   c. foreigners came to look for workers in China.

4. The work that the Chinese had to do in their new countries was
   a. easy, and made them rich.
   b. hard, but didn't take much skill.
   c. hard and took courage and skill.

5. Today, Chinese people live
   a. only in China and the United States.
   b. in many countries throughout the world.
   c. only in China and Hong Kong.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. Imagine yourself as a Cantonese farmer in 1850. What would your village be like? Why might you want to work overseas? How would you feel about leaving your family?

2. This was a story about the early Chinese migration overseas. How does it compare with other migrations that you may have read about?

3. Think about the Chinese children growing up in other countries. Would they be different from the Chinese children growing up in America? What languages might they be able to speak? Would they be the same as the languages spoken by Chinese children in America?

4. Read about the work that the Chinese did in their new countries again. How many of these jobs took skill and courage? Can we really say that the work that they did was "unskilled labor?"

A Chinese Miner's Letter

by Don Wong

illustrated by Julie Wong

The discovery of gold in California and other western states attracted thousands of Chinese to America in the 1850's and 1860's. The Chinese and other miners searched for gold along the streams and rivers of the gold country of the West.

Many of the Chinese miners worked claims abandoned by white miners. It took a lot of work to mine the gold in these claims, so the white miners sold them to the Chinese. The Chinese worked carefully and patiently to get the gold from these claims.

In the 1870's, when the surface deposits of gold ran out, the Chinese had to look for other ways to make a living. The following is a letter from a Chinese miner to his wife in China. It was written in August 1862.

Dear Mei Ling:

I am writing you from our mining camp on the Rogue River in the Oregon Territory. We have been here for three months. It took us over a month to get here from San Francisco. In San Francisco, I met and joined a group of miners from our village. It is good to be in the company of someone familiar. To get to the Rogue River, we traveled by boat and on foot.

America is such a beautiful country. I

wish you could see the wonderful things here. Many times there were no trails so we followed the rivers and streams through the mountains. We passed rivers of roaring white water and waterfalls.

We went through forests of tall trees that almost touched the heavens. Their leaves and branches blocked the sun as we hiked through. I have seen sights that you can't find in China. Towering mountains disappearing in thick clouds. Animals that don't have names in our language. At night when we camp, we see their glowing eyes in the dark.

Our camp is on a hill overlooking the river. It is a place close to where two streams join the Rogue River. We bought an old claim from a miner from France. He sold it to us for $300. We are paying him $50 a month until we have paid him off.

We bought our supplies and equipment at Sun Woo's store in a town 20 miles away from our camp. Sun Woo sold us everything on credit. We promised to pay him back when we mine enough gold. We are living in tents now, but we have to build cabins soon. Our tents aren't much use in the winter rains.

There has been a terrible smell in our camp the past two days. The smell comes from Sing Toy. There are animals in America called "skunks" which protect themselves by spraying their enemies with something that smells horrible. Sing Toy got sprayed Sunday night. What happened was that Sing Toy was sleeping in his tent when noises woke him. As the noises got closer to him, he picked up his boot. Sing Toy threw it at the sounds. That is when the skunk sprayed him. Ah Sam told me that Sing Toy dashed out of his tent and jumped into the river. He said he never saw anyone run that fast before. The smell doesn't wash off with soap. Sing Toy's tent stinks so badly that we had to bury it. Everyone in camp laughed. Sing Toy didn't think it was so funny.

The stories that they told in China about picking up gold from the ground aren't true. We have to work very hard to get our gold. I work six days a week from when the sun rises until it goes down. My partner and I use a special wood box to mine the gold. One of us shovels dirt and gravel from the river bed into the box. The other person rocks the box while pouring water in it. The water washes the dirt away and the rocking separates the gold from the gravel. Most of the gold comes in the shape of tiny flakes and small nuggets. We mined $35 worth of gold in the first week. With luck, in two years I may be able to return to China a wealthy man. Sometimes I think that I won't go back to

China. There are nights that I dream of starting a new life here. In my dreams, I see us raising a family and running a store like Sun Woo's. But the people in America don't seem to like us even though we do little to bother them. They make it hard to live here in peace.

The sunlight becomes dim, I must end this letter. I will send you money when I find enough gold. Please write to me soon. Send the letter to me in care of Sun Woo's Store, Bear Creek, Oregon Territory.

Li Tang.

QUESTIONS

1. Where did the gold miners look for gold?
   a. Along the beaches and in the bays.
   b. Along the rivers and streams of the gold country.
   c. Near the farmlands and valleys.

2. What happened to Li Tang in San Francisco?
   a. He lost all his money.
   b. He went to buy supplies.
   c. He joined a group of miners from his village.

3. Why did Li Tang and the miners have to build cabins?
   a. Sun Woo wanted his tents back.
   b. The tents were useless in the heavy rains.
   c. They built the cabins for extra money.

4. What caused the terrible smell in camp?
   a. Sing Toy's dog.
   b. A skunk sprayed Sing Toy.
   c. Li Tang spilled something.

5. Li Tang mined gold by
   a. picking rocks from the ground.
   b. separating the gold from the dirt and gravel in a special wood box.
   c. buying a machine to dig holes.

6. What did Li Tang want to do in two years?
   a. Send for his wife.
   b. Go back to China a wealthy man.
   c. Open a store like Sun Woo's.

ACTIVITIES

1. Find out more about gold mining at the library. Can you find the answers to these questions: Where is gold found? How is gold found? What is it used for? Do you have anything made of gold at home?

2. On a map of California, locate the gold mining country. Go to the library to gather this information.

Illustrated by Ottip Ramos

A Bone Collector's Story

by Irene Dea Collier

The Chinese gold miners did not send all their money back to China. In California they paid special taxes, called the foreign miner's tax. The Chinese, then, were some of the earliest taxpayers in California.

Much of the gold found by the miners did not belong to the miners themselves, but to the Chinese companies that sent them into the gold country. These companies would also send some men up to the mining camps to collect the bones of the dead miners for reburial in China. Below is a story of a bone collector.

"What a strange town!" Uncle Frank thought as he and his nephew Sam drove their wagon out of town. A fading laundry sign, a restaurant with "Chinese and American Food," houses painted in pink and red, favorite Chinese colors--all were signs that Chinese people once lived in the town. But they had all disappeared without a trace.

The townspeople were friendly but uneasy when he asked about the Chinese miners. Even

the tax collector was friendly, until they asked about the mining site. He, of all people, should have known where the miners were. "Those tax collectors always hang around the Chinese camps like vultures," Uncle Frank thought.

The only mean person they met was the minister. He yelled at them and called them heathens because they dug up people's bones to send back to China. "That minister is stupid," Uncle Frank thought. "Even Christians dig up their dead and rebury them in wartime. Besides, if a Chinese person doesn't get a proper burial, his soul would wander around the countryside without peace."

Uncle Frank was glad to be out of the town. They stopped to set up camp and Uncle Frank started a fire to cook their evening meal. He sent his nephew to water the horses.

The campsite was a quiet spot, and the only sound was the food cooking on the fire. Uncle Frank heard footsteps and thought, "Well, it's about time my nephew got back." He poked the fire.

"Well, Cousin," a voice behind him said. "Aren't you going to say hello?"

Uncle Frank turned around and was surprised to see his Cousin Lee with two other men. He shook hands with them and invited them to eat. The smoke from the campfire made it hard to see their faces, but Uncle Frank thought that they looked thin and pale. He went to the wagon and brought out more supplies.

Uncle Frank began to worry about his nephew. What was taking him so long? The sun had disappeared and the moon cast long, dark shadows as it shone through the leaves of the trees. Behind the camp, the hills lay silent and black. The night was warm, but Uncle Frank shivered.

Cousin Lee had brought a package of food too--dried vegetables, beef jerky and salt fish. It was better than anything that Uncle Frank had ever tasted in America, but a slow chill kept creeping into his body. He tried to ignore it.

"When the company didn't hear from you," Uncle Frank said, "we thought that something had happened. Where are the rest of the men? I thought that there were fifteen of you at this camp."

"The other men are staying behind those hills," Cousin Lee said. "You know how it is with those tax collectors. They'll come twice as often as they're supposed to and tax us every time. We learned to put out a few men for show and hide the rest away until they leave. It's not getting better. Now there are fake tax collectors coming here to bother us too."

"When are the rest of the men coming down to our camp?" asked Uncle Frank. Actually, he wanted to ask about another nephew who was working in the mines. The boy's mother had written and said she hadn't heard from him in two years. Uncle Frank didn't want to ask about him since none of the men had mentioned him. "Bad luck to receive bad news in the night," he thought.

Cousin Lee didn't answer, but stared into the fire instead. The old man was feeling uneasy again. The chill was getting worse and his bones felt like rubber. Even sitting close to the fire didn't seem to help.

Finally, Cousin Lee spoke. "Frank, we have a favor to ask of you." Cousin Lee pulled out a bag full of the most beautiful gold nuggets that Frank had ever seen. "Where did you get these?" Uncle Frank asked in surprise.

"We found a new pocket of gold in the river by accident," Cousin Lee said. "We want to ask you to take this back to the company and send our shares home. Our families are poor and they need the money." Uncle Frank promised to take care of it and hid it carefully in the rice sack. He took out a blanket from the wagon and put it around his shoulders. He still felt cold. He tried listening to the men but felt himself falling asleep.

When Uncle Frank woke up the next morning, his nephew Sam was cooking breakfast and the horses were eating grass next to the wagon. There were no traces of the

other men. The morning was cold, but Uncle Frank's chill was gone. "Where were you last night? Where's Cousin Lee?"

"Who's Cousin Lee?" asked Sam. "When I came back last night, you had fallen asleep and the rice was burning. I didn't want to wake you up so I saved some food for you. As for being late, I ran into a Mexican cowboy who said that we won't find anyone at the camp any more. A few years ago, there was a rumor that the Chinese found some gold. Some of the townspeople demanded a share of it. When the Chinese refused, they were all shot. Even the town Chinese disappeared that night and no one knows what happened to them. The gold was never found. The cowboy said that he didn't think there ever was any. He said to tell you that he's sorry. The Chinese miners never hurt anyone. Most of the time, they just worked the places that no one else wanted any more. If there ever was any gold, he said that they deserved to keep it."

Uncle Frank didn't know what to think. Last night seemed too real to be a dream. His knees felt weak as he walked over to the rice sack. His hands were shaking as he poured out the contents of a small cloth bag. Shining in the sun was a pile of red-yellow nuggets. A sudden chill shot up his arm as he picked up the largest piece. The gold was as cold and hard as ice.

QUESTIONS

1. The lives of the Chinese miners were
   a. easy, because they found much gold and became rich.
   b. hard, because they were taxed and sometimes people didn't like them.
   c. hard, because they didn't get enough to eat.

2. The tax collectors
   a. sometimes collected more taxes than they should.
   b. were always fair to the Chinese miners.
   c. didn't collect much money in taxes.

3. Sometimes the Chinese miners were bothered by
   a. cattle.
   b. fake tax collectors.
   c. cowboys and horses.

4. The Chinese miners usually
   a. worked at the best mines.
   b. fought with the white miners for the best mines.
   c. only worked in the mining camps that no one else wanted any more.

5. The Chinese miners

   a. sent all their money back to China.
   b. kept all their money and spent it in the mining towns.
   c. were some of the first taxpayers in California.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

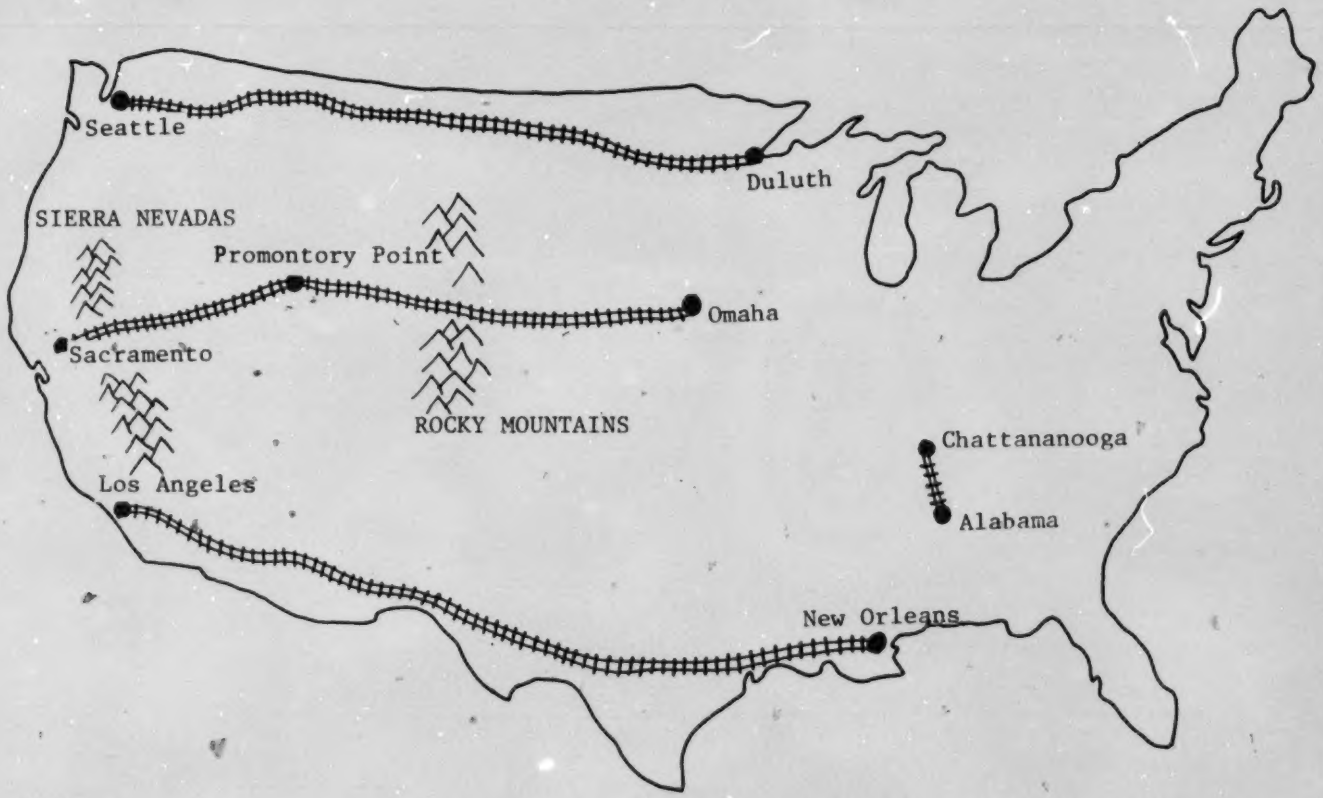
1. The story you have just read is not a true story, although the tax was actually collected from the Chinese miners. Was this tax a fair tax?

2. Did Uncle Frank have a dream? Or was he visited by ghosts? What caused Uncle Frank's chill?

The Chinese: Railroad Builders of the West

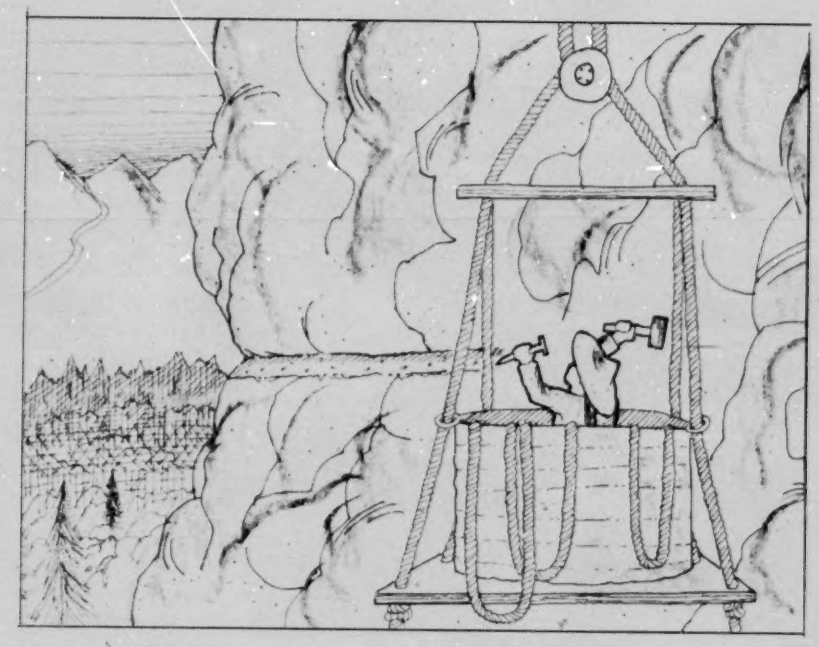
by Don Wong

illustrated by Wes Senzaki



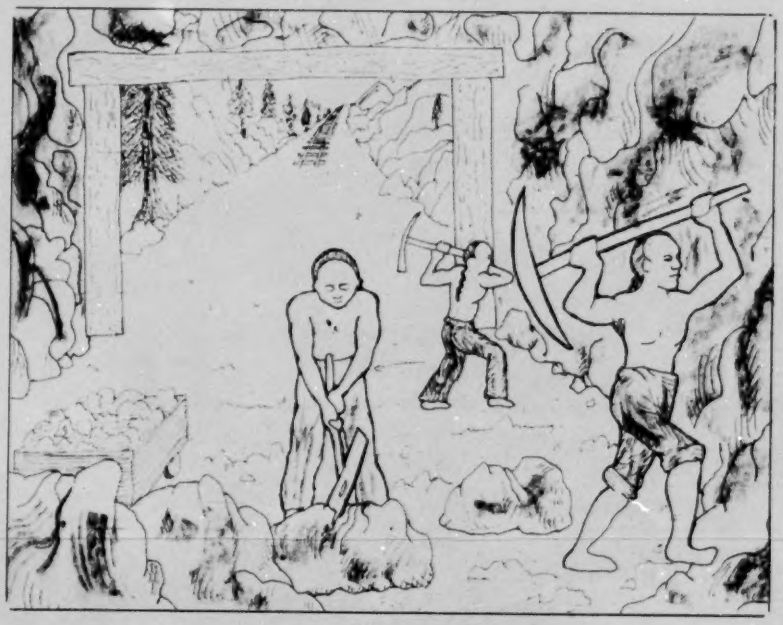
The Chinese helped to build many railroads in America. Much of this railroad building took place over 90 years ago. In 1869, 13,000 Chinese workers completed the western half of the Transcontinental Railroad from Sacramento, California to Promontory Point, Utah. The Northern Pacific Railroad joining Duluth, Minnesota with Seattle, Washington employed thousands of Chinese. Chinese workers also helped to complete the Southern Pacific Railroad from Los Angeles to New Orleans. In the South, there were Chinese building railroads in Alabama and Tennesse.

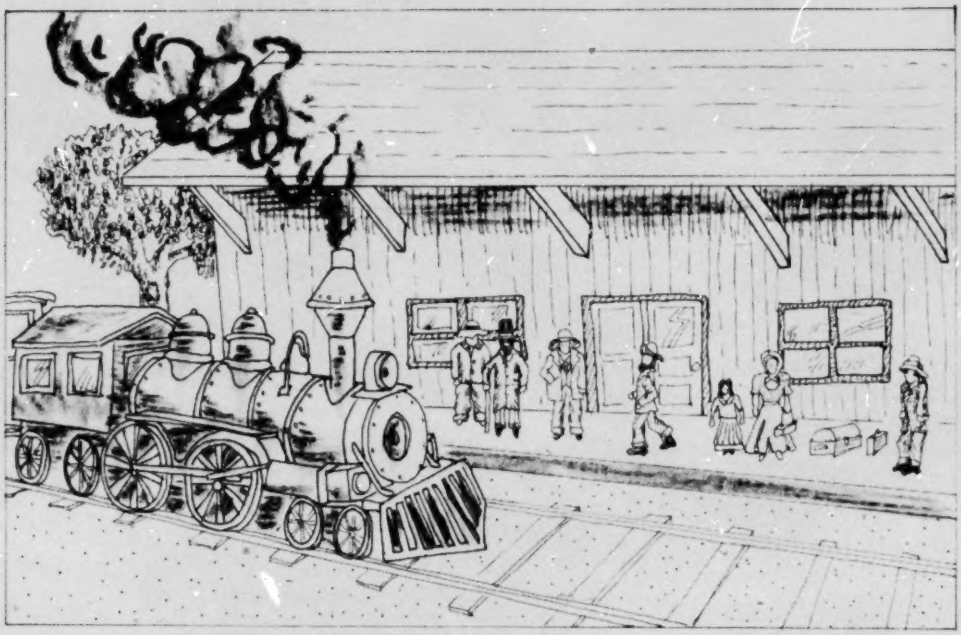
The railroad companies hired the Chinese because they were strong and fearless. They didn't give up when the weather was bad or the work got hard. Accidents were common. It was reported that over 1200 Chinese lost their lives while building the Transcontinental Railroad. In 1869, four out of five railroad workers on the Central Pacific were Chinese. Besides the Chinese, only the Irish worked on the railroad in such large numbers. They built the other part of the Transcontinental Railroad from Omaha.



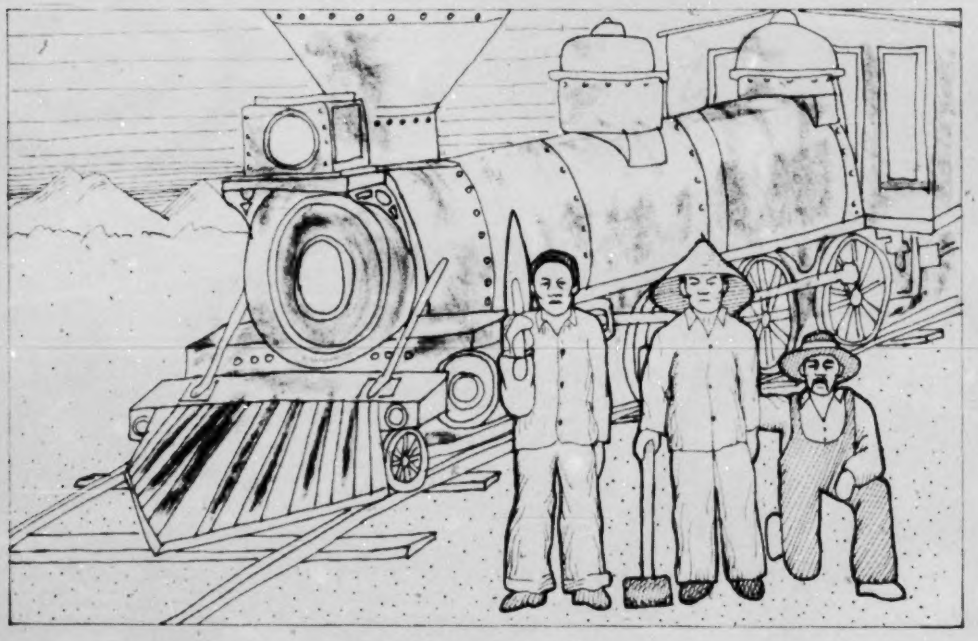
During the building of the railroad across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Chinese were given the job of carving a roadbed across a steep cliff at Cape Horn. Chinese workers thought of a way of doing it. They wove large baskets. Chinese workers got into these baskets and they were lowered by ropes from above. With hammers and chisels, they chipped away a shelf. Blasting powder was used on the shelf, to make it wide enough for tracks. Once the fuses were lit, the Chinese workers had to be pulled up quickly or the explosion would kill them.

The Chinese built tunnels for many of the railroads. On the Transcontinental Railroad, they made 15 tunnels through the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Working in tunnels was very difficult and dangerous. Often cave-ins buried workers under piles of rock. In some tunnels, the rock was so hard that they could only cut through eight inches a day.





The railroads that the Chinese built helped the West grow rapidly. People could now travel long distances quickly and safely. The East Coast of the United States was joined with the West. When the Transcontinental Railroad was finished on May 10, 1869, trains began to bring settlers and goods from the East. Over 142,000 people went West on the Transcontinental Railroad in the first year. Trains going East carried farm products, gold, silver, and other minerals.



Today we have faster ways of traveling from one place to another. Cars, buses, and airplanes are what most of us ride in. But a hundred years ago, the train was the fastest land transportation. The Chinese played a large role in making the railroads possible in the West.

QUESTIONS

1. One of the many achievements of Chinese in America is

   a. sailing boats on the Mississippi River.
   b. catching wild animals for their fur.
   c. building the railroads in the West.

2. The Chinese were good railroad builders because

   a. they could drive bulldozers.
   b. they knew how to build trains.
   c. they were strong and fearless.

3. The Chinese were lowered in baskets at Cape Horn to

   a. dig tunnels.
   b. bring water to the trains.
   c. made a ledge wide enough for tracks.

4. Working in railroad tunnels was dangerous because

   a. it got very cold in the tunnels.
   b. cave-ins buried workers.
   c. they could drown in the water.

5. The railroads caused the West to grow because

   a. there was a fast and safe way to travel from the East.
   b. the railroads hired Chinese.
   c. the Chinese did all of the hard work.

ACTIVITY

Make a flour and salt map of the routes of the railroads in the West built by Chinese workers.

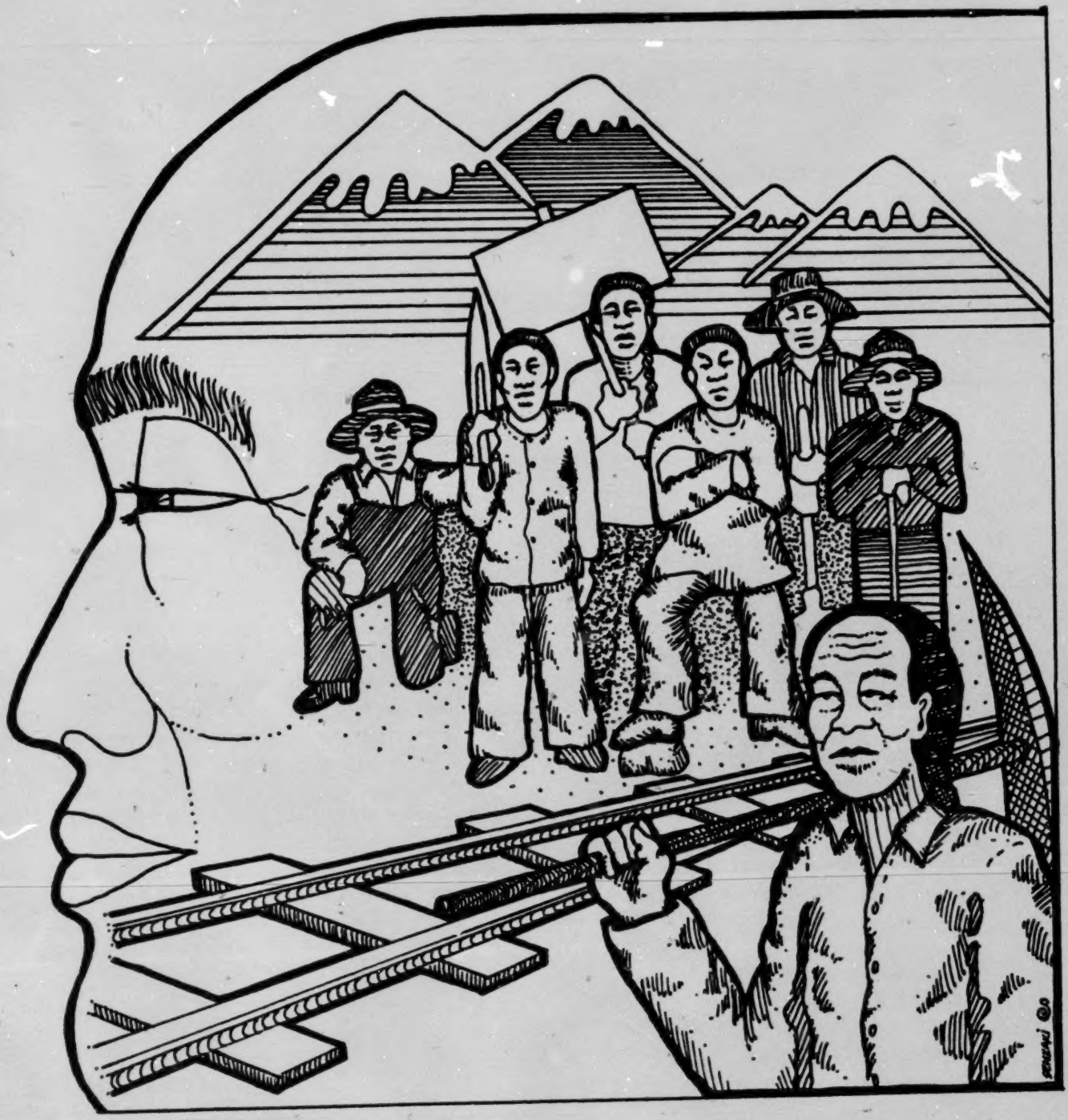
Instructions for a flour and salt map:

1. Draw the outline of your map on a piece of cardboard or plywood, so you will know where the mountain ranges and boundaries belong.
2. Mix two parts salt and one part flour.
3. Slowly add enough water to mixture until it holds its shape.
4. Put the wet mixture on the board layer by layer.
5. Allow to dry before painting.

Chinese Workers Stand Up for Their Rights

by Don Wong

illustrated by Wes Senzaki



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It was going to be a hot day in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. But it didn't matter to the Chinese workers of the Central Pacific Railroad. They weren't working today. Gone were the sounds of sledge hammers pounding spikes, grunting men laying rails in place and cursing overseers telling the men to work faster. The building of the Central Pacific Railroad came to a stop on June 24, 1867, when over 5,000 Chinese workers walked off their jobs.

The Chinese workers stood and sat near their tents waiting for the bosses of the Central Pacific Railroad to give in to their demands for better pay and better working conditions. Earlier, the Chinese workers had threatened to quit in large numbers, so the railroad owner had reluctantly raised their wages from $26 to $35 a month. But the Chinese were still underpaid and overworked compared to the white workers. The white workers worked 10 hours a day and received $40 a month and free meals. The Chinese were expected to work from sunrise to sunset and to pay for their own food. The overseers whipped the Chinese workers and wouldn't let them quit to take other jobs.

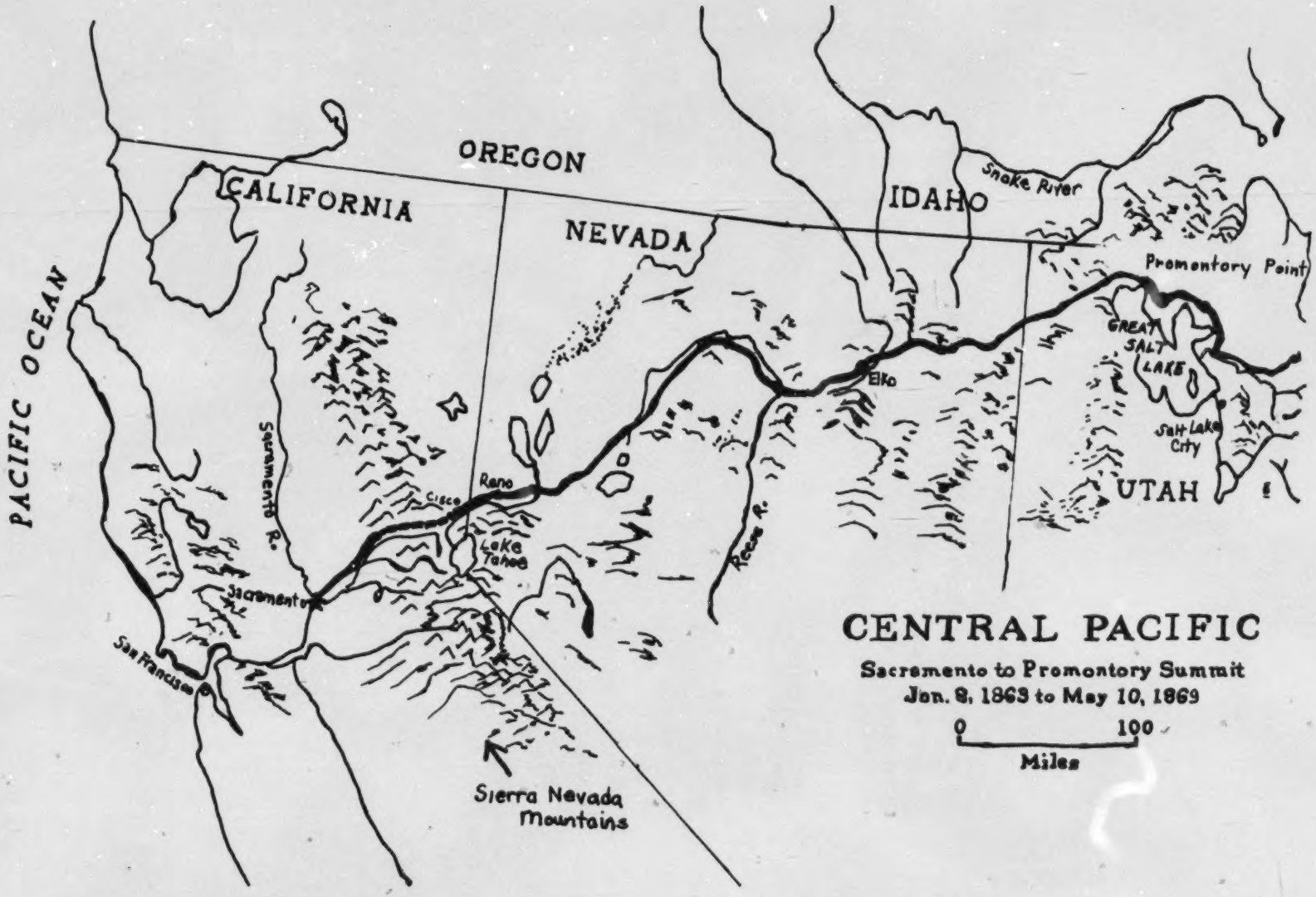
Chinese workers knew when they were hired by the Central Pacific Railroad that the work would be hard. Many Chinese workers saw the task of building a railroad across the mountains as a challenge to their skill and courage. They became experts in using blasting powder and digging tunnels. Even though the Chinese proved themselves to be good workers, the owners did not treat them fairly.

The memory of the terrible winter of 1866 was fresh in their minds. Charles Crocker, one of the Central Pacific owners, had told the Chinese to keep working in the deep snow and severe cold. Most of the white workers had left the mountains and would not return until the spring. Many Chinese workers died that winter. On Christmas day, a gang of Chinese workers was buried by an avalanche. Before they could be rescued, five workers lost their lives.

The greed of the Central Pacific Railroad owners made them force the Chinese to work under unsafe conditions and in bad weather. The American government paid the Central Pacific railroad with money and land for every mile of track laid. The Central Pacific owners wanted to make more money so they ordered the Chinese to work under dangerous conditions. By the time when the Central Pacific Railroad was finished in 1869, the four owners of the railroad were millionaires.

The Chinese were upset that the bosses didn't care about what happened to them. In the spring of 1867, they met with the owners to ask for better pay and better working conditions. The owners said no. The decision to strike was reached after many meetings among the Chinese workers. Posters stating their demands were placed in all the Chinese workers' camps. Written in Chinese, they told the workers not to work until they received $40 a month and a 10-hour working day.

News of the strike reached Crocker in Sacramento. He rushed to Cisco where the Chinese workers were camped. The Chinese workers gathered around him. He was angry and threatened to punish them unless they returned to work. The workers again told him their demands. Crocker was determined to break the strike. Rather than give in to the workers' demands for better treatment, he ordered their food supplies cut off. To replace the Chinese, he telegraphed his partner in the East and asked him to get 10,000 Black laborers. But Crocker didn't need them. The strike ended in a week, since the Chinese could not survive without food. During the strike, the white workers did not help the Chinese in their fight for better working conditions and fair wages.


OREGON
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
IDAHO
Snake River
Promontory Point
PACIFIC OCEAN
Sacramento R.
Reno
Elko
GREAT SALT LAKE
Salt Lake City
UTAH
Lake Tahoe
Reese R.
Sacramento
San Francisco
Sierra Nevada Mountains
CENTRAL PACIFIC
Sacramento to Promontory Summit
Jan. 8, 1863 to May 10, 1869
0
100
Miles

QUESTIONS

1. Why did the Chinese workers go on strike?
   a. They wanted better working conditions and more pay.
   b. The railroads would not hire more Chinese.
   c. Charles Crocker called the Chinese lazy.

2. What happened in the terrible winter of 1866?
   a. Many Chinese workers died in accidents in the mountains.
   b. White workers were buried under avalanches.
   c. Workers lived on trains to keep warm.

3. Why did the railroad owners make the Chinese work under bad conditions?
   a. The government told them to do it.
   b. They wanted to make more money for themselves.
   c. The tracks had to be finished before they rusted.

4. Crocker forced the Chinese back to work by
   a. giving them shorter working hours.
   b. stopping their food supplies.
   c. whipping them.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. If you were a worker in a shoe factory, how would you change things if they didn't pay you enough and working conditions were poor? Could you do anything alone? Or would you need help from other workers?

2. Do workers today have any way to protect themselves from employers who treat them badly? What do they do?

A Morning Among the Tules

by Irene Dea Collier

Before 1870, farming was impossible in many parts of California because the land was swampy and covered with tules. Chinese workers did a large part of the job of clearing and draining the swamps around Sacramento, the capital of California. They built levees, or dikes, to hold back the rivers so that the land could be drained. Today, the area has some of the richest farmlands in the United States.

illustrated by Angela Chen

Louie woke up to the sound of frogs. He rolled out of his blanket and stood in the doorway of the tent. The sun had not come up yet and the horizon was gray.

One by one, the rest of the crew came out of the tent. The air was soon filled with bitter smoke. The morning cooking fires always smoked a lot from the wood being damp. In fact, everything was wet, and the older men complained of aching joints from sleeping close to the ground month after month.

Louie threw a stick of wood into the fire. He was only 15 years old and his bones didn't ache, so he felt all right. It was summer and most mornings were warm--except when the fog blew in and covered the land like a thick blanket. Then everything would disappear and you couldn't even see from one tent to another.

The water in the iron pot boiled and splashed hot drops into the fire. Louie dipped a small pan into the pot and mixed the hot water with some cold river water. He splashed the warm water over his face and felt clean and refreshed.

He went to eat breakfast. Morning meals were light, just rice and salt fish. It was nice to sit around the fire and laugh and talk, though. Louie knew they wouldn't get a chance to relax like this until after the sun went down. By then they would be so tired that they would just eat and go to sleep.

Early morning was the only time he had to look around and stretch. Louie liked to look at the big, dark mountain across the valley--the one people called Devil Mountain. * Below, the land was covered with tules, low willows and water. The tules waved back and forth in the morning breeze, making a whispering sound. They looked pretty, but Louie knew that he would be cursing them all day long. They were slippery, and it was almost impossible to dig up the dirt below their matted roots.

* *Devil Mountain--Mount Diablo*

The rest of the day, all he had time to see was dirt, mud, water and mosquitoes. To drain the land, the men would dig big ditches, shoveling mud and sand into wheelbarrows. Then they built levees by piling the dirt and rocks until the levee wall was higher than a man's head. This levee had to be strong enough to keep the river from flooding the fields.

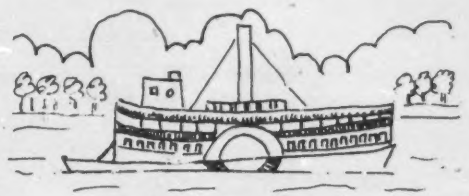
Louie knew that the land could be turned into good farmland. Last spring, he helped the cook plant vegetables on a piece of cleared land. He was surprised at how fast the beans and spinach grew. Under the tule swamp, the soil was rich, dark and fertile.

Louie hoped to rent some farmland for himself someday. He thought about how different the farms in California were from the farms in China. In the village, the farms were small and the farmers and their families worked on the land themselves. Here in California, the farms were large and often owned by businessmen, not farmers. The landowners sometimes rented out the farmland or hired people like the Chinese to do their farming for them.

On the far horizon, Louie could see the mountains where he had worked as a water carrier on the railroad. His job then was to carry hot tea up and down the railroad lines for the workers. In a way, he was still working for the railroad company. After the landowners harvested their crops, they paid the railroads to carry their vegetables and fruits far away to be sold at high prices.

"No wonder the railroad company is rich," Louie thought. He helped make the railroad company rich and the landowners rich, but nobody was making him rich. After paying for food and clothing, there wasn't much left to send home to his family. He thought about them often and wondered how they would like it here. In spite of many hardships, the beauty of this land fascinated him. From the high mountain pines to the hot, flat swamps--there was a lot to remember and talk about when he returned to his family.

Down by the tents, the boss was yelling at them to get going. Louie picked up a shovel and joined the other men as they worked on the levee. Sometimes the men grumbled as they worked. Every day was the same. Whenever they got a break, they would walk over to Walnut Grove to visit the Chinese workers there, or take a steamboat to San Francisco.



They always looked forward to having the time to travel around the valley and see the countryside.

As Louie worked on the levee, he looked over to the east. The sun was just coming up through the mists of the tule marshes. It looked like a great big orange.

Louie knew it was going to be another hot day.

QUESTIONS

1. The area around the Sacramento River was
   a. wet, swampy and full of mosquitoes.
   b. always good farmland.
   c. worth a lot of money to the landowners before it was drained and cleared.

2. Tules are
   a. short trees that grow in swamps.
   b. long, thin plants that grow in swamps.
   c. a type of mosquito that flies around the swamps.

3. A levee is
   a. a ditch that drains into a river.
   b. a strong wall, similar to a dike, that is built from dirt and rock.
   c. a type of crop grown in the Sacramento area.

4. The farms in California were
   a. small, like the farms in China.
   b. large, and owned by the Chinese.
   c. large, and owned by businessmen.

5. Many of the landowners in California
   a. only worked on the farms themselves.
   b. hired others to farm for them.
   c. gave land to the Chinese to farm.

6. Today, the land in the Sacramento Delta is
   a. still worthless swampland.
   b. no longer used as farmland.
   c. among the richest farmlands in the United States.

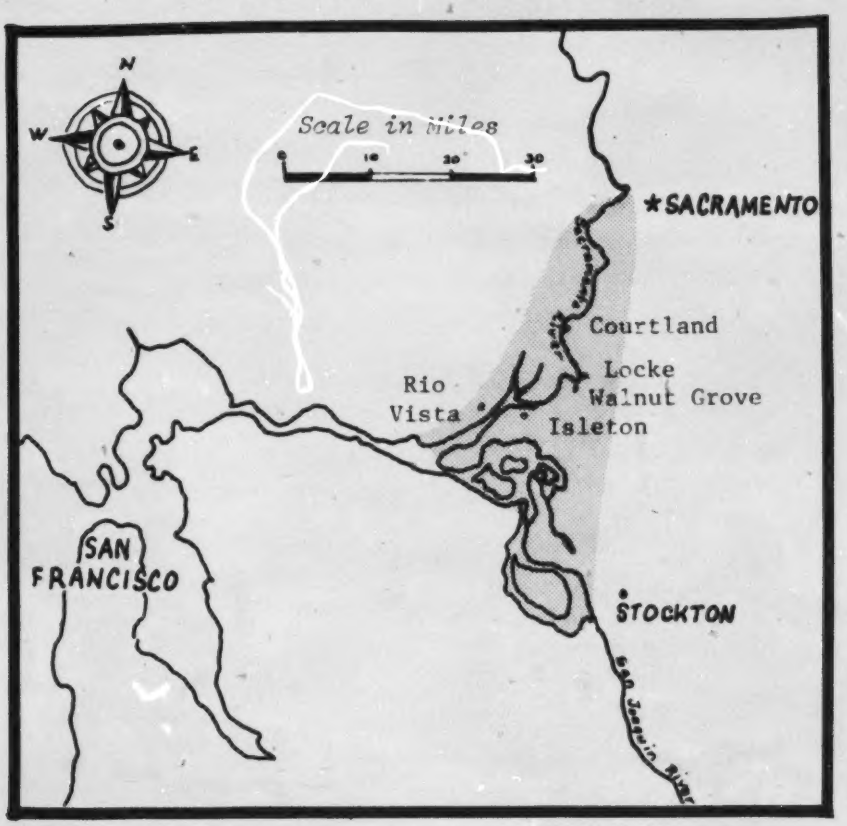
ACTIVITIES

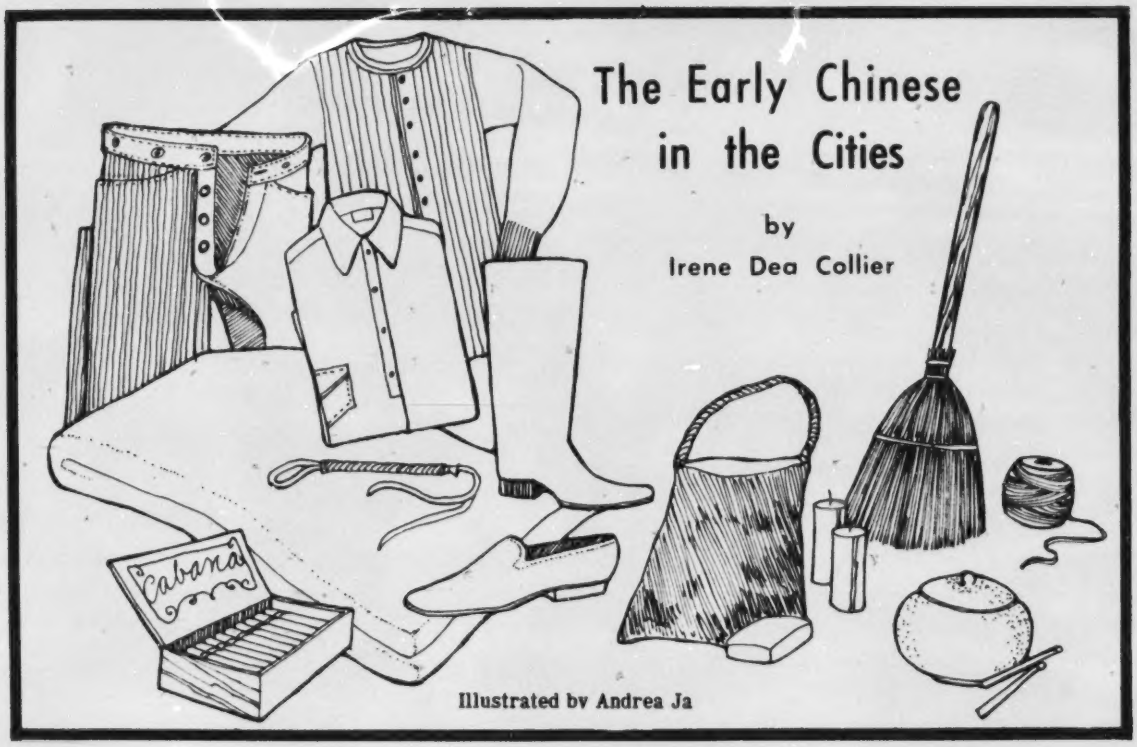
1. Go to the library and read about tule marshes. What were they like? What kinds of plants and animals live there? Why would it make good farmland? Prepare a report on your findings.

2. Find out what kinds of crops are grown in the Sacramento Delta today.

3. Collect labels from the shipping crates of vegetables and fruits grown in the Sacramento Delta. Your supermarket might be able to help you with this project. Find the towns listed on the labels on a map of California.

The Sacramento Delta

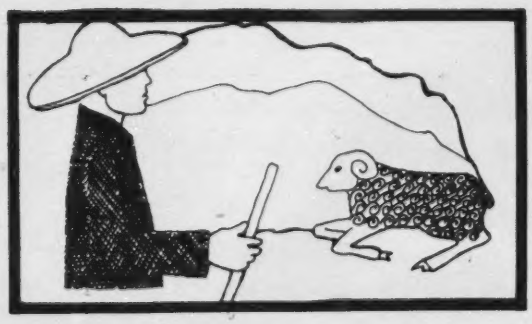




Many of the early Chinese worked in farming, mining, fishing and building railroads in the countryside. What about the Chinese in the cities? What did they do for a living? Above are some of the objects that the Chinese made from 1850-1900.

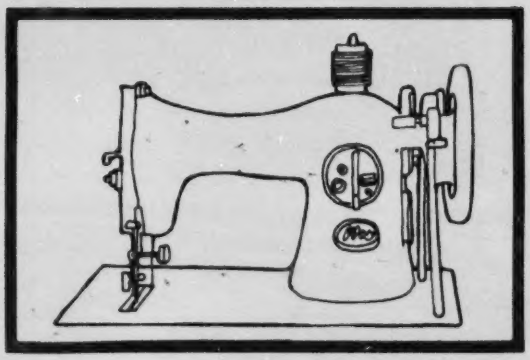
When California became a state in 1850, there were almost no factories. Clothing, shoes and household items had to be shipped from the East Coast. Shipping the goods took a long time because the boats had to sail around South America. The railroads were not yet completed.

In 1861, the Civil War broke out on the East Coast. Factories started to make weapons and war goods instead of household items. Supplies to the West were cut. Because the Civil War cut off supplies, small factories appeared in many California cities. Many Chinese workers were hired to make the goods that were once made in East Coast factories.



1. Woolens

Once there were Chinese shepherds in California and Nevada. They sent the sheep's wool to the cities. Chinese workers in the city mills then spun the wool into cloth for blankets, shirts, scarves, coats and jackets.

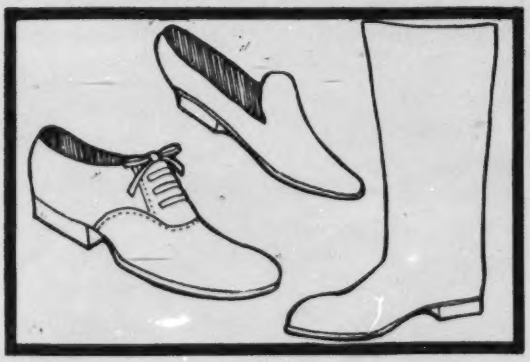


2. Sewing Trades

If you lived in San Francisco in the 1870's, most of your clothes were sewn by Chinese men. They made shirts, long underwear, overalls, blouses and pants.

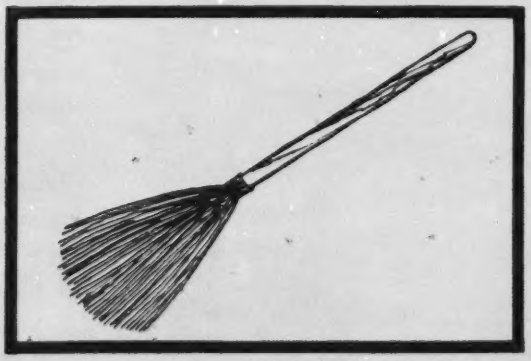
3. Cigars

Looking at old cigar boxes, you'd never suspect that the cigars had been made by Chinese workers in Chinese-owned factories. Most of the Chinese cigar factories used Spanish names like Ramirez and Company or Cabanes and Company.



4. Shoes, boots and slippers

If you bought a pair of shoes or boots in 1873, they were probably made by the Chinese. If you bought a pair of slippers, they were certainly made by the Chinese. Some of the boot and slipper factories were owned by the Chinese themselves.

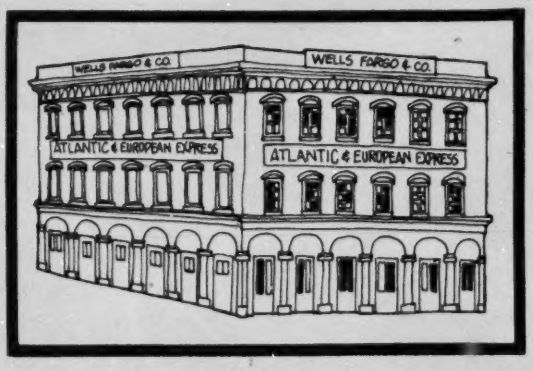


5. Broom-making

Chinese workers in the 1880's made brooms. These brooms were made from broom corn grown by Chinese farmers along the Sacramento River.

6. Other Items

Can you imagine a time when there were no paper bags? What was used instead? Some people used burlap bags made by Chinese workers. Farmers also used these bags for storing potatoes, walnuts and other crops. The Chinese also made string, matches, candles, soap, pots and horsewhips.

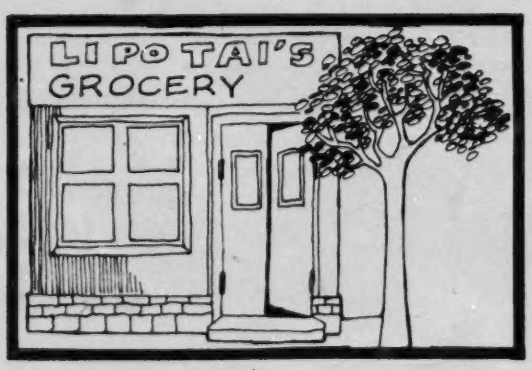


7. Chinese Construction Workers

During the gold rush, Chinese workmen built many new houses in San Francisco. They constructed the first stone building in San Francisco, the Parrott Building. It was located on the corner of California and Montgomery Streets. It was made of granite blocks from China.

8. Land Fill

Some of San Francisco was once swampland. It took many years to fill these wet areas with tons of dirt to make San Francisco larger. The Chinese did most of the work.



9. Stores

Chinese people had stores, laundries and restaurants in California, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. Sometimes they were the only stores in town. For this reason, they were often very important.

Many of the jobs the Chinese had did not pay well. Some workers were paid only $1.00 each day. Still, the Chinese learned to make the items well enough to open factories of their own, such as in the cigar, broom and slipper industries.

When the railroads were completed, however, the East Coast factories started to send clothes, shoes and cigars to the West Coast again. They were able to sell the items at a lower price. Many Chinese lost their jobs. Today, it is often forgotten that the Chinese made many essential items, especially during and after the Civil War.

QUESTIONS

1. The Civil War
   a. caused the East Coast factories to make weapons and war goods.
   b. had no effect on people in California.
   c. was fought in 1850.

2. In 1870, shirts, pants and overalls in San Francisco were sewn by
   a. non-Chinese girls.
   b. Chinese men.
   c. Chinese men and women.

3. The Chinese once owned factories that made
   a. slippers, cigars and brooms.
   b. woolen clothes.
   c. blankets, scarves and coats.

4. Chinese factory workers were paid
   a. a fair wage.
   b. more than other workers.
   c. only $1.00 a day.

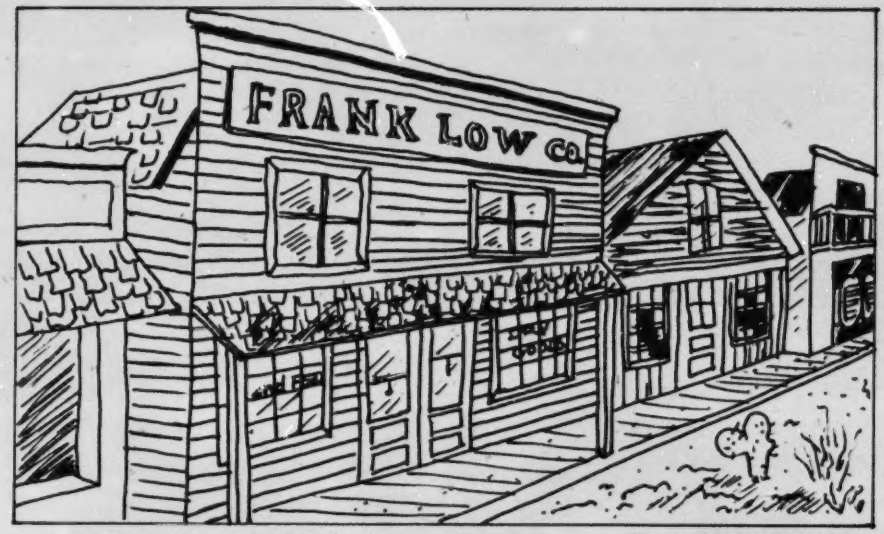
5. After the railroad was completed, the Chinese workers
   a. found new jobs in the factories on the East Coast.
   b. found new jobs on the railroads.
   c. lost their jobs in the factories.

THOUGHT QUESTION

1. Think about some of the items mentioned in the story. How would your life be changed if you could't get some of them? Think about how someone in the 1870's would be affected if they couldn't get matches, candles, soap, and wool clothing.

The World on Your Shoulders

by Don Wong



illustrated by Ellen Wong

This story takes place in 1908.

The hot desert winds blew clouds of dust past Frank Low's store in Shane, Nevada. A man walked to the front door and discovered it was locked. He tapped on the window but no one opened the door. After waiting a moment, the man gave up and left. This had already happened several times this morning to other people.

Inside the store, Chung Fong Low sat in a rocking chair behind the long wooden counter. She didn't answer the door even though she heard the knocking. Tears ran down her cheeks. She took a handkerchief to her face and wiped the tears away. Three days ago, they had buried her husband, Frank Low. He died suddenly after a short illness. Chung Fong Low was on her own with a family to raise and a store to run.

As she sat in silence, Chung Fong thought about her life with Frank Low. Twenty years ago, her father agreed to let Frank marry her. She was 17. She remembered her father telling her mother that Frank would be a good husband because he didn't gamble or drink. Chung Fong hardly knew the dark, soft spoken man who was ten years older than she.

Before she realized it, she was on a train to Elko and then on a wagon to Shane. Shane was at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. It was very hot of the time. In the winter, icy cold winds came down from the mountains.

Chung Fong remembered how homesick she felt for the first few months in Shane. These feelings slowly went away as she began to work in the store. She stacked canned foods on the shelves, swept the floors and wrapped packages. Later Frank taught her to do the bookkeeping. When Frank thought she was ready, he let her work in the store alone. Frank traveled around the territory selling supplies from his wagon.

Chung Fong didn't speak English when she first arrived in Shane, so the customers would point out what they wanted. She got it for

them and wrote the price on a piece of paper. Loneliness was a part of her life until the boys were born. For the last 12 years, she had been too busy to think about it with three boys to care for.

Chung Fong touched the jade pendant hanging from her neck. Her mother had given it to her on her wedding day. She remembered her mother saying to her: "Daughter, you're like me in many ways. You have courage and don't give up easily. That will carry you through the worst times." Chung Fong asked what she meant. Her mother cupped her hands around Chung Fong's face and said, "Someday the whole world may rest on your shoulders." Those words echoed in her mind as she sat in the quiet store.

A little boy stuck his head through the curtain hanging in the doorway to the back room. "Ma, I'm hungry. When do we eat?" he asked her in Chinese. Chung Fong answered in Chinese, "Charlie, I'll fix the food soon. You go back and watch your brothers." Charlie vanished behind the curtain. Chung Fong said to herself, Charlie needs a haircut. After supper, I'll give him one, and the other boys too.

There was a tapping at the window. A voice called to her, "Bee Duh, * open the door. It's Howard." Howard was a Paiute Indian who traded at the store. The Indians traded furs and deer meat for cloth and other supplies. Chung Fong had known Howard for almost as long as she had lived in Shane. Howard called her Bee Duh because Chung Fong had always treated the Indians with kindness and honesty. Chung Fong opened the front door.

"Howdy, Howard. What do you want?"

* Paiute word meaning Aunt

30

Chung Fong asked him. The Indian stepped in and went in to the counter. He placed a package wrapped in oilcloth on the counter. Chung Fong said, "What's that for?"

Howard replied, "I brought some deer meat for the boys."

"Thank you, Howard," Chung Fong said. She shook his hand. "Bee Duh," he said, "Frank Low was a good man. Folks around here trusted him. They don't care if he was Chinese." Howard turned and stared out the front window. The winds whistled by the store, rattling the windows and creaking the doors.

"Bee Duh, people want to know when you are opening the store for business." Chung Fong said, "Pretty soon, my boys got to eat first. Tell people to come at two o'clock."

"I'll tell them," Howard said. He went out the front door and she locked it behind him.

Andrew, another son, ran to her from the back room. He yelled, "Ma, where's our supper?" Chung Fong held him steady and answered, "Andrew, we will eat soon." "Ma, when is Pa coming back?" Andrew asked. Chung Fong almost burst into tears. Andrew didn't understand that their father was dead. He had gone to the funeral but he didn't seem to know what had happened. Chung Fong held back her tears and said, "Andrew, go get your brothers and bring them here." Andrew ran to get his brothers. They filed out and lined up in front of their mother. "Your father is not coming back. He has gone to a far place," Chung Fong said. "Ma, can we go too?" Matthew asked.

"Nobody can go with him. We've got to stay and take care of each other and the store. Your mother can't do everything. When you boys are big enough, you can help me," she said. Charlie went to her and tugged her sleeve. "Ma," he said, "I will take care of you." Chung Fong felt a tear rolling down her cheek. She brushed it away and said, "All right, everybody go back and clean up for supper. Andrew and Matthew, set the table. After we eat, I'm going to give all of you haircuts."

The boys ran through the curtain to the back, chattering noisily. Chung Fong made a small sign from paper and put it in the front window. It read: "Open two o'clock."

QUESTIONS

1. Chung Fong and her husband ran a _____ in Nevada.
   a. general store.
   b. restaurant.
   c. hotel.

2. Howard came to the store to
   a. buy supplies.
   b. bring the boys deer meat.
   c. ask for work.

3. People thought Frank Low was
   a. a good honest man.
   b. a man who they couldn't trust.
   c. too friendly to the Indians.

4. Chung Fong told her sons
   a. their father would never return and they had to help her.
   b. to water the horses.
   c. to fix supper and sweep the floors.

5. Chung Fong Low can be described as
   a. a strong and hard-working woman.
   b. a tired woman.
   c. an old woman from San Francisco.

6. What did Chung Fong's mother mean by what she said to her?
   a. Chung Fong shouldn't remarry.
   b. Chung Fong might became the head of her family and should accept it.
   c. Chung Fong should move back to San Francisco.

ACTIVITY

Women's roles: It was a hard life for Chung Fong Low in Nevada. She often had to do things that men normally did. Today, women are starting to do things that only men did before. For example, women are becoming firefighters. Can you think of any other jobs women are now starting to work at? Write a report about women doing one of them, and draw a picture to go with it.

No. 127, San Francisco Okay

by Don Wong

illustrated by Hideo Yoshida

From 1910 to 1940, Angel Island in San Francisco Bay served as an immigration station for Chinese coming to America. The stay at Angel Island could last from weeks to months, or even years.

The Chinese were forced to stay at Angel Island for questioning. The immigration officials asked questions about their family, friends, and village. A person was freed when the officials believed that he was telling the truth. The American government wanted only a select group of Chinese to come. They believed that they could catch those Chinese who were not allowed to come by questioning them. This story tells about what happened to 15-year-old Siu Lun Wong in December 1920 at Angel Island.

Siu Lun Wong had just finished two hours of questioning by immigration officers. He was tired and relieved as he walked down the hallway to his barracks. A guard followed closely behind him. "Stop here," the guard ordered Siu Lun. He waited for the guard to unlock the door to his barracks. The door swung open and he entered. The guard slammed the door behind him.

The barracks where Siu Lun lived was home for about 100 men and boys while they stayed on Angel Island. Siu Lun walked slowly through the rows of bunk beds to find his; he lay down on it. He closed his eyes. The

endless series of questions echoed in his head. *How many gold teeth does your grandmother have? Are you telling the truth? Who lives two doors to the left of your house? How far is the well from your house?*

Siu Lun must have answered more than a hundred questions in all. Maybe the immigration people were finally starting to believe him. This was the third time that Siu Lun had been questioned. The first time, he was confused and kept giving wrong answers. The officers asked him the same questions over and over. The second time he was less nervous but still made mistakes.

He stared at the frame of the bunk above him. Thirteen marks were scratched on the metal frame. Siu Lun had kept track of the days by scratching a mark for each day. He pulled out a nail from under his mattress and drew another line on the frame.

A voice called to him. "Siu Lun, how was the questioning?" It was Wah Sun. He had been on Angel Island for 44 days and slept in the bunk across from Siu Lun. Wah Sun was 10 years older than him. Siu Lun said, "I think they believe me now." "Don't be so sure," Wah Sun warned him. "Look at me, my papers are in order and I have answered every question right. But still I am not free to go. I overheard the guards saying that they think I'm lying because I am always nervous during the questioning."

"Wah Sun, don't worry. They will let you go," Siu Lun said.

"What are they giving us for dinner tonight?" "Boiled beef and vegetables," Wah Sun told him. Siu Lun frowned. The food was cooked in a pressure cooker. The vegetables were mushy and the meat was dry and stringy. Most of the Chinese on Angel Island were not accustomed to eating this food. Siu Lun said, "I hope I don't get sick again."

"Siu Lun, while you were away this

morning I wrote a poem in ink on the wall," Wah Sun revealed.

"Tomorrow I am going to carve it out." He pointed at the poem on the wall. Siu Lun asked Wah Sun to read it to him. Siu Lun had never finished school in China so he didn't read very well.

America is a strong country but it has no justice.

In this prison we were robbed of our freedom.

Without a chance to explain; it is really horrible.

I bow my head and think in vain.

But there nothing I can do.

"Wah Sun, your poem shows much anger in your heart," Siu Lun commented, "Yes, that's how I feel about this place," grumbled Wah Sun.

The door opened. A guard walked in. He banged his billyclub against an iron pole that supported the bunk beds. The talking among the men and boys slowly died. Their attention was on the guard. He shouted, "Number 249, 249. Come with me." A man went to the guard and left with him. He was going to be questioned. Each person was given a number when they arrived on Angel Island. Siu Lun's number was 127.

Siu Lun lay back on his bunk bed, his arms folded behind his head. He thought about his mother. Tears rolled down her face the morning he left their village to come to America. It was over two months ago. She made him wear the cotton jacket that she made. She said, "Think of me and China when you wear it." Siu Lun had the jacket folded as a pillow under his head. His fingers felt the rough cloth.

The door to the barracks opened again. guard appeared and banged his billy club against the iron pole. Everyone in the room stopped what they were doing. The guard shouted, "Number 127, 127. San Francisco okay!" That was Wong's number. He jumped out of his bunk bed. He couldn't believe it! Quickly he scrambled to gather his belongings into his bag. He put on his jacket. Wah Sun came over to him and said, "Good Luck, Siu Lun." Siu Lun answered back, "I hope they let you go soon. Goodbye, Wah Sun." They shook hands and embraced.

Siu Lun hurried through the open doorway. The guard told him to go to the office to pick up his papers. Siu Lun went to the office and gave his number. The clerk handed him his entry permit and other papers. The clerk said, "Hurry or you'll miss the boat to Frisco!" He ran out the front door and down the gravel path to the wharf.

The steamboat blew its horn twice to tell everyone that it was ready to leave. Siu Lun was aboard as they pulled the gangplank away from the dock. He was out of breath as he stood at the railing. He looked at the barracks on Angel Island. He thought that he saw Wah Sun waving from a window. His two weeks of waiting and questioning was over, but how much longer would Wah Sun have to wait?

He could see San Francisco as the boat rounded the island. His father would be waiting for him at the dock. Siu Lun was going to meet his father for the first time. His father had left China soon after Siu Lun was born. Siu Lun had only seen a picture of him that his mother had. He was very excited as he stood at the railing.

QUESTIONS Did you understand what you have read?

1. Angel Island was a place where
   a. Chinese were brought to learn English.
   b. Siu Lun wanted to live.
   c. immigration officials questioned Chinese entering the U.S.

2. The food made Siu Lun sick because
   a. the food was greasy.
   b. he had never eaten steak and potatoes before.
   c. the food was steam cooked.

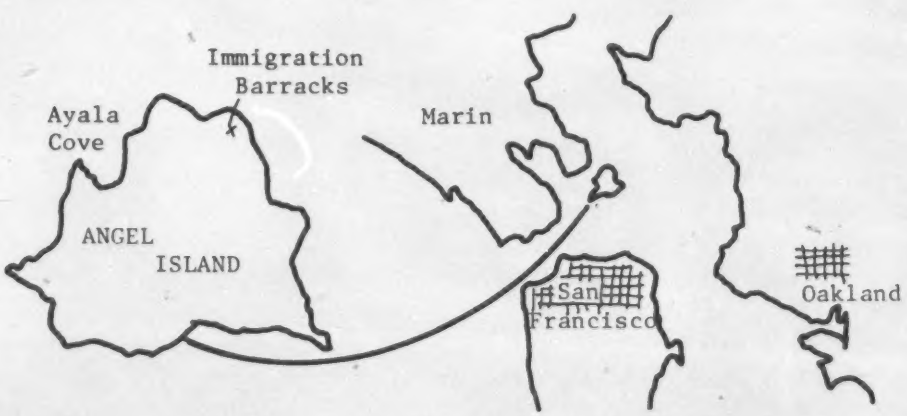
3. What did Wah Sun mean by, "America is a strong country but it has no justice" in his poem?
   a. America treats the Chinese unfairly.
   b. America is a country filled with robbers.
   c. The U.S. has a large army and no police.

4. Why didn't they let Wah Sun go?
   a. They thought he was lying.
   b. The officials hadn't questioned him yet.
   c. His number was too high.

5. How did Siu Lun know that he was free to go?
   a. He received a letter.
   b. The guard called his number.
   c. Wah Sun told him.

ACTIVITY

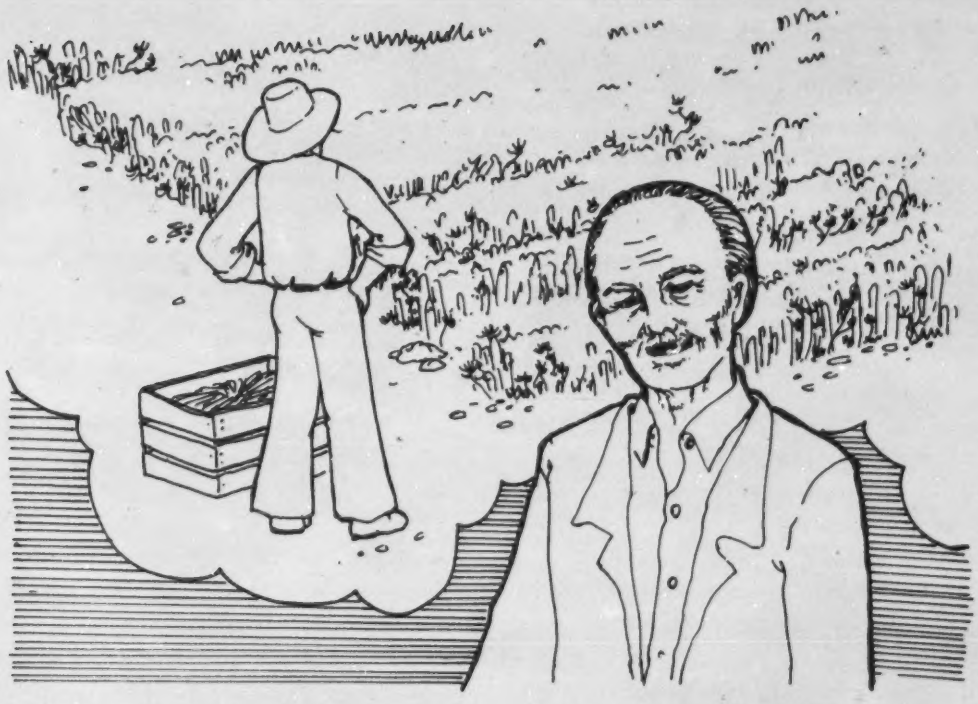
1. Write a story about what it would be like to be on Angel Island in 1920. Express your feelings about the questioning and waiting.



The Travels of George Wong

by Don Wong

illustrated by Angela Chen



The Chinese helped to start agriculture in California. Their knowledge of farming and their back-breaking labor enabled California's farmland to become highly productive. Three out of four farm workers in the 1880's were Chinese. Chinese were engaged in tilling, planting, caring for, and harvesting crops all over California and the West. Celery, asparagus, peaches, wheat, lettuce, apricots, tomatoes, grapes, and oranges were some of the crops grown by Chinese.

After 1900, the number of Chinese farm workers became smaller because laws prevented Chinese from coming to the United States and anti-Chinese feelings drove them from the countryside into the large cities. Laws were passed in California and other states saying that Chinese couldn't own land. The following story is about George Wong, a Chinese farm worker.

My name is George Wong. I was born in Toishan, China 78 years ago. Before I retired, I made my living by doing farmwork for almost 50 years.

I came to America when I was 14. That was in 1912. When I first arrived, I was taken to Angel Island for questioning. In those days, the government allowed only a few Chinese to come to America. So some Chinese tried to enter using false papers. They asked me all kinds of questions to make sure I was "the real George Wong." There were some Chinese who

could not answer the questions, and they were sent back to China.

When they let me go, my uncle met me at the dock in San Francisco and took me to Locke. That's near Sacramento in the Delta. The Delta was swamplands until the Chinese drained the water and turned it into the richest farm land in California. My uncle found me a job with an asparagus farmer. My first job was putting boxes of asparagus on the cannery wagon. At the cannery, asparagus is cut and put in cans. When they showed me how, I began to cut asparagus for two dollars a day.

With the money that I earned, I paid off the ship ticket to America. It took almost two years to pay back $200 for the ship ticket. Later, I sent money to my mother and her cousins in China whenever I could. In those days times were bad in China. The rice crops were bad. Soldiers were fighting all the time. The money I sent back made life easier for my mother. One year she fixed the roof of our house with the money.

When I got older, I traveled up and down California doing farm work. I only stayed at a place for a few months. You see, farm crops get picked at different times a year. Let me give you an example. In 1921, I spent January and February in San Francisco waiting for the winter rains to stop. In March, I went to Locke and cut asparagus for a couple of months. That was hard work, bending over for 10 hours a day to cut off the tips of the plants. It was a good season for asparagus. The cannery packed so much that we got a bonus that year. I made almost $200.

Our work crew went to celebrate in Locke. There were over 500 workers in town. A Chinese Opera company came up from San Francisco to put on a show. Boy, did we have a good time! I gambled for two whole days straight. I won $50.

By May the peach crop was ready for picking. I went up to Marysville to pick peaches. In September I took the train down to Delano to work on the grape harvest. There was some trouble in the field. Pilipinos * stopped working and demanded higher pay and better working conditions. Boy, did the boss get mad. His big foreman beat up one fellow something awful. Made him an example for rest of us. I tried to stay out of it myself. But other Chinese workers quit in support of the Pilipinos. At that time you had to be very brave to stand up to the boss. You see, in those days there was lots of prejudice against Chinese, Japanese, and Pilipinos. Most of the older Chinese told me: "George, go back to China when you made enough money. The people don't want us in America." Anyway, everyone went back to work picking grapes when the boss agreed to pay everyone more.

I ended the year in Watsonville drying apples. You don't see dried apples much these days.

Anyway, that was one of my better years doing farm work. Sometimes, I would be lucky to get four to six months of steady work. Things got bad in the 1930's. A lot of people were out of work. Today, the farmworker is being replaced by big machines but you still need farmworkers. They have yet to build a machine that can tell if peaches and grapes are ready for picking.

Nowadays, I spend my time in the park in San Francisco's Chinatown, sitting in the sun and talking with friends. I got a room close by.

* People from the Phillipine Islands.

It's cheap, about $50 a month. I eat twice a day at Porkchop House on Jackson Street. Sometimes on the weekends, I go to the free movies at Asian Community Center. They show movies about China.

I guess I get by okay now. The only thing that bothers me sometimes is having no family here. When I came to this country over 60 years ago, I had this dream about bringing a wife over from China and raising a family. I think about it when I see the kids laughing and playing in the park. My dream could have come true if there wasn't such tough laws against Chinese coming to America. Still, I can't complain too much, life has not been so bad to me.

QUESTIONS ABOUT GEORGE WONG

1. What was George Wong's first job?
   a. He put boxes of asparagus on the cannery wagon.
   b. He picked cantaloupes.
   c. He harvested grapes.

2. After reading George Wong's story, which answer best describes a farmworker's life?
   a. A farmworker's life is hard and lonely.
   b. A farmworker's life is easy because they only work six months a year.
   c. A farmworker's life is good because they make lots of money.

3. Why was cutting asparagus so hard?
   a. Asparagus shoots are very thick.
   b. You have to reach up to cut them.
   c. You have to bend over, it hurts the back.

4. The Pilipino workers walked off the job in Delano because
   a. they were paid too low and working conditions were bad.
   b. they were treated well.
   c. they finished their work early.

5. How did George use the money that he earned?
   a. He paid for the boat ride and sent money home to his mother and cousins.
   b. He traveled up and down California by bus.
   c. He went back to China for a visit.

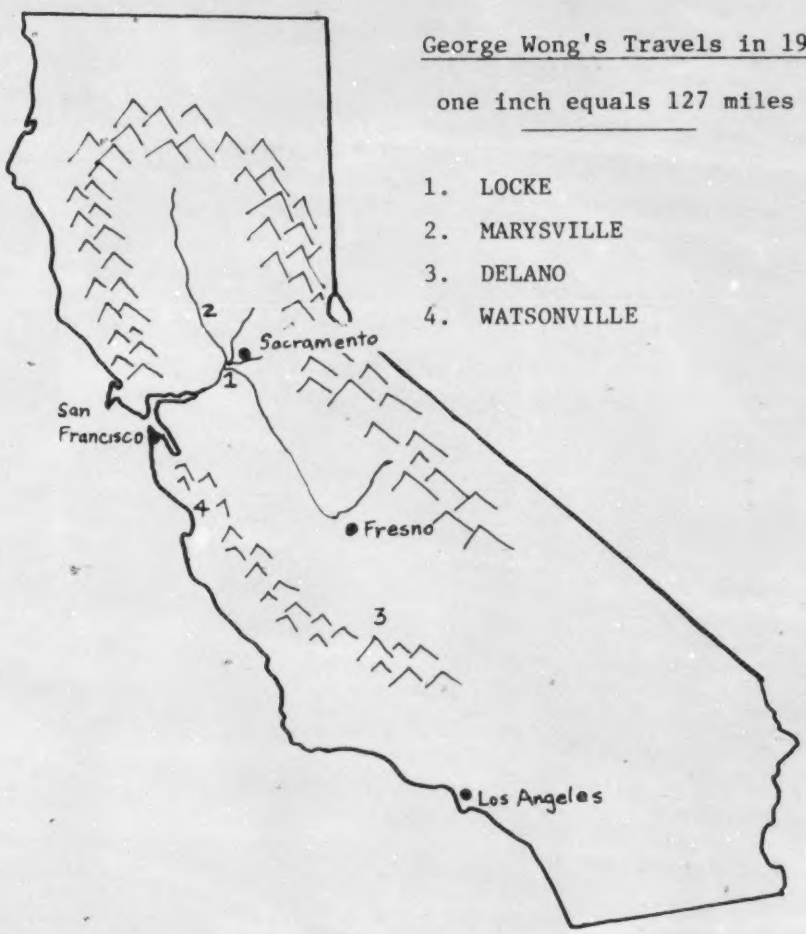
6. Why did the older Chinese tell George to go back to China?
   a. Because people didn't want the Chinese to live in America.
   b. Because it was easier to find work in China.
   c. Because they wanted him to work for them in China.

7. What do you think after reading George's story? George seems to be

   a. worried and tired.
   b. a little sad about his life but not unhappy.
   c. funny and couldn't stop laughing.

ACTIVITY

Trace the route of George Wong in 1921 on a map of California. Find the location of every place that he stopped to work. Label them. Cut out pictures from magazines of the crops he picked and paste them on the map where they are grown.



George Wong's Travels in 1921

one inch equals 127 miles

1. LOCKE
2. MARYSVILLE
3. DELANO
4. WATSONVILLE

Ben's Way

by Don Wong

illustrated by Ottip Ramos

*Ben Fee was a Chinese American writer and labor organizer * who fought against injustice and inequality for most of his life. Ben came to the United States in 1923, when he was 15 years old. He arrived at a time when Americans disliked the Chinese and treated them badly. The Chinese weren't allowed to live in certain neighborhoods. They were not allowed to work in certain jobs. Ben hated what he saw. He tried to change things that he thought were unfair and wrong. The following story happened in 1924 and describes one of Ben's experiences with prejudice.*

Ben and his friend were walking along Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco. Ben was hungry and wanted to have something to eat. His friend pointed to a restaurant across the street. It was called the Almond Blossom.

They walked in and sat at the counter, waiting for the waitress to take their order. Instead of asking them what they wanted to eat, the waitress told them that she couldn't serve them. Ben said he wanted to know why they couldn't eat here. The waitress said, "I have no prejudice against Chinese but the manager

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* *Ben helped workers stand up for their rights. At the time, many companies treated their workers badly. They under paid them and made them work under unsafe and poor working conditions. Ben helped the workers find ways to make the companies treat them better.*

does." Ben asked to talk with the manager. The manager came out from the kitchen. He was also the cook. Ben asked him why they couldn't eat here. He said, "I have no prejudice against Chinese but the customers will object to you eating here. Sorry." Ben didn't believe the manager. He thought the manager was using this excuse to hide his own prejudice. Ben was angry. An idea came to him. Ben counted the number of seats at the counter. There were ten seats. He looked at the menu in the window. The most expensive thing was porterhouse steak for three dollars.

The next day at school he talked to his friends. He told them what happened at the Almond Blossom and asked them to go back to the restaurant with him. Ten whites, one Japanese, and one Pilipino went with him to the Almond Blossom.

The ten whites went in first and sat down at the counter. The waitress came and took their orders. They wanted 10 porterhouse steaks. Their order was worth $30. The manager smiled as he fried the steaks. Then Ben and the others came in and sat at a table. The waitress looked at them and said, "You know I have no prejudice against you." She went to get the manager. The manager came out and began to say the same thing as before.

But Ben stopped him and shouted, "Why do your customers object to us? What have we ever done to them?" Ben turned and asked the ten white kids at the counter, "Hey, gentlemen, why do you object to us eating here? I have never crossed your path before. I never did you any wrong. Why do you object?" The kids replied, "Who objects?" Ben answered, "The manager says you object to us eating here."

One of kids said, "That's not true. If they don't serve you, we object." The ten kids got up and left the Almond Blossom. The manager couldn't believe it. He ran out and watched the kids walking down the street. He came back and stared at the steaks on the stove.

Finally he threw his arms up into the air and told Ben and his friends that they could eat at the Almond Blossom.

What happened at the Almond Blossom took place over 50 years ago. It was Ben Fee's way of telling the manager what he did was wrong. What would you have done in Ben's place? How would you change the manager's mind?

QUESTIONS

1. Ben arrived in America at a time when
   a. the Chinese were given the best jobs.
   b. the Chinese were treated badly.
   c. the Chinese were welcome in America.

2. The waitress told Ben and his friend that
   a. the best thing on the menu was porterhouse steak.
   b. the manager was going to give them a free meal.
   c. they could not eat at the Almond Blossom.

3. The manager used the excuse of the customers objecting to Ben because
   a. he didn't want to admit that he disliked Chinese.
   b. Chinese could afford porterhouse steaks.
   c. the restaurant didn't have room for them to sit.

4. The ten kids walked out of the restaurant because
   a. they wanted to teach the manager a lesson.
   b. the steaks took too long to cook.
   c. Ben laughed at them.

ACTIVITY

If you disagree with what Ben did, what would you have done at the Almond Blossom? With your classmates, act out what happened at the Almond Blossom. Try different endings. Was there another way to convince the manager to let them eat there?

Billy's Big Day

by Don Wong

illustrated by Bill Hames

The Chinese started the shrimp fishing industry in California in the 1870's. They also fished for shrimp in the Gulf of Mexico. Their shrimp fishing made other fishermen jealous. From 1870 to 1920, many laws were passed to try to drive the Chinese out of the fishing industry. In California, the government told the Chinese that they couldn't ship their shrimp to China in 1905. But the Chinese didn't give up. In 1930, there were still 14 shrimp fishing camps around the San Francisco Bay. But they disappeared too, because the water became so polluted that fewer shrimp were caught. The following story takes place at a shrimp fishing camp near San Francisco Bay in 1939.

The first light of dawn brightened the cloudy sky. Billy Lum sat on the dock of the Golden West Shrimp Camp looking for his father's shrimp boat on San Francisco Bay. He couldn't see far because the fog hung like a curtain over the water. He had waited an hour for his father's boat to return. The other shrimp boats had already come in. He

wondered what was taking his father so long this morning.

Today was a big day for Billy. He had hardly slept thinking about it. Billy was going to ask his father if he could go shrimp fishing with him. His father had told him that after his 12th birthday he could come along.

Last Wednesday was Billy's birthday. On the dock, the fishermen were busy unloading large woven baskets of shrimp from their boats. The gray shrimp were still alive; they jumped and wiggled.

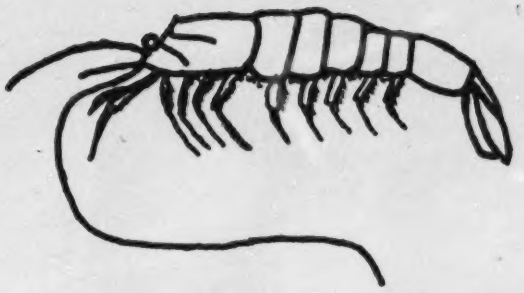
Billy's Uncle Harold saw him sitting with nothing to do and called out, "Hey, Billy, don't just sit there. Get to work, start packing the shrimp in the ice."

"Okay," Billy said. With a metal scoop, he carried the shrimp from the baskets to the wooden crates filled with crushed ice. At the same time, other men were carrying heavy baskets of shrimp to vats of boiling salt water. Some of the shrimp was cooked and laid out to dry under the sun. Later the shells were removed and the dried shrimp meat was sent to San Francisco to be sold.

Billy had filled three crates before he stopped to rest. He looked out at the Bay. The fog had turned into a thin mist. His father's boat appeared from the mist. The patched canvas sail flapped in the weak breeze. Billy knew from the rocking of the boat on the water that catch of shrimp was poor.

Billy's father was tying the boat to the dock when Billy ran up to him. "Pa, what took you so long?" he asked. "Can't you see I'm busy!" snapped his father. A hurt look came over Billy's face. He turned and walked away from his father.

A hand touched his shoulder. Billy turned and his father looked down at him. "Billy, things haven't been going right lately. The shrimp catch has been bad for a long time. This morning we got a net tangled in the propeller. It took me almost an hour to free it. We couldn't start the motor so we put up the sail." His father stopped talking and stared out into the Bay. Billy wanted to ask him about going



shrimp fishing but he decided to wait until his father was in a better mood.

Father began to speak again. "Well, enough time is wasted. We have shrimp to unload." He got back on his boat and began to lift baskets of shrimp to the dock. Billy went back to packing the shrimp.

Billy was finishing the last crate when he heard the honking of a truck horn. A gray Ford truck came down the dirt road to the camp. Behind the steering wheel was Mr. Murdock, the state fishing inspector. Billy thought it was strange for him to return so soon. It had only been a week since he had been by to inspect the shrimp. The truck rolled to a stop by the storage shed. Billy went over to the fence and sat on it to watch what was happening.

A small crowd of fishermen surrounded Murdock. They greeted him. Billy's father made his way through the crowd to see Murdock. He shook Murdock's hand. "Hello, Mr. Murdock, what brings you back to us?" he said.

"I have some bad news," Murdock said. Billy wondered what was wrong. Uncle Harold said, "It has something to do with our poor shrimp catches, I bet."

"Right, Harold," Murdock answered. The state ran some tests on the Bay. I got the results yesterday. The water is bad for shrimp. Our tests found traces of oil, chemicals, and other bad things in the water. The shrimp can't breed in great numbers any more. That means you'll catch less shrimp."

"Where does the bad stuff come from?" Uncle Harold asked. "Ships, factories, and cities are to blame for the pollution," Murdock

answered glumly. "Can't the government do anything about it?" Billy's father questioned. "I am afraid there is nothing the state can do," Murdock admitted. There was a moment of silence. Finally Murdock spoke, "I have to visit other shrimp camps. See you next month."

After Murdock left, Billy listened to the fishermen talking among themselves. Two of the younger men wanted to quit and sell their boats. Others complained that they couldn't do anything to bring the Bay shrimp back.

Harold scratched his balding head and declared, "It's not like the old days. We caught a lot of shrimp then. But it wasn't easy with all those fishing laws against the Chinese. They passed a law telling us to stop using nets from China. So we started using a new net. But I guess this pollution thing is something harder to beat." Billy was worried. Did this mean that he would never get a chance to fish for shrimp? What were the fishermen going to do?

Billy's father shouted to the fishermen, "I have something to say!" After he had their attention he said, "I've been fishing with most of you for more that 20 years. It's a hard life and we don't make a lot of money. Fishing is the only life we know. We should stick with it as long as we can."

Most of the fishermen nodded in agreement. Uncle Harold yelled, "I think that I speak for everybody when I say we're with you all the way."

"Okay, let's get back to work then," Billy's father said.

Now was the time for Billy's big question to his father. Billy went up to him. "Pa, can I go out with you fishing tomorrow?" he asked eagerly.

"How old are you?" his father said. "I'm 12 and you said that I could go when I reached 12," Billy told him.

"You're right," Father said, "that's what I said. Billy, tomorrow you go shrimp fishing!"

QUESTIONS

1. Billy wanted to ask his father
   a. if he could go to San Francisco.
   b. to buy him a boat.
   c. if he could go fishing with him.

2. Billy's father was late because
   a. shrimp kept getting out of his nets.
   b. a net got tangled in his propeller.
   c. he got lost in the fog.

3. Mr. Murdock said the shrimp catches were poor because
   a. the fishermen caught too many shrimp.
   b. the shrimp went South for the winter.
   c. shrimp couldn't breed in the polluted waters.

4. Pollution of San Francisco Bay is caused by
   a. people, ships and factories.
   b. Mr. Murdock and state testing.
   c. people living in Los Angeles.

5. Some fishermen wanted to quit because
   a. the taxes were too high.
   b. they could barely make a living by shrimp fishing.
   c. they didn't like Billy's father.

6. Laws were passed against Chinese shrimp fishermen because
   a. other fishermen were jealous of the Chinese.
   b. shrimp should not be eaten.
   c. their nets got caught on the large ships in the bay.

ACTIVITIES

1. Find out more about shrimp at the public library or in the school library. Where are shrimp found? What do they eat? How do fishermen catch them today? Where do you buy them to eat? Write a report on what you have found out.

2. Pollution is a problem in our lives. Find out more about it at the library. How does it harm man and animals? What can we do about it? Is there a project which your class can do to help solve this problem?

Bessie Lee, a Native of Monterey

by Irene Dea Collier

illustrated by Angela Chen

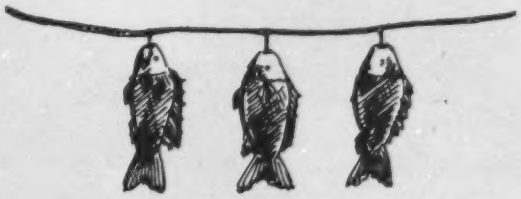
My name is Bessie Lee. You might consider me an old-timer in the Monterey area because I've lived here for all 69 years of my life. Monterey is a very special place to me.

Many people think that the Chinese only lived in San Francisco, but that's not true. There was a big group of Chinese right here in Monterey in the 1860's. My grandparents were a part of that group. They started a fishing business here, so you can see that my family has been around this area for a long time.

In my grandmother's time, fishing was a big business among the Chinese. Sometimes the fishermen sent the fresh fish to San Francisco. Other times the men would sell the fish here in baskets, hung on poles around their

shoulders. The fish that weren't sold fresh were salted and dried in the sun. The fish would not spoil for a long time because the sun and the salt made the fish meat hard. I learned to dry fish from my grandmother when I was a little girl.

Sometimes my family would dry 100 pounds of fish at a time. First, we would lay them out on wire nets. Then we would salt them and string them up by the mouth on clotheslines. That was my favorite part. Other people in Monterey dried clothes on their clotheslines but we would dry fish!



We used fish of every size--from tiny,tiny ones the size of your little finger to great, big ones three feet long. Some of the fish were split and dried flat. Others were put in oil until they smelled real nice--at least to those who had eaten fish that way all their lives. I guess it's one of those foods you have to learn to like--just like you have to learn to like aged cheese.

A funny thing about salt fish--you get used to it and sometimes even have cravings for it. Many of the younger people don't care for it anymore because they got used to eating other things. It's really too bad because salt fish is a nutritious and important food.

My grandmother used to say that it was an important food in Canton. That's the part of China she came from. The Cantonese were lucky because they lived close to the sea. When they had droughts or famines, the farmers depended heavily on food from the sea. Salt fish was one of the things they ate when nothing would grow on the farms.

In this country, it was one of the foods that the early Chinese took with them to the mines and the railroad camps all over the American

West. Today, you can always find it on the tables of the Cantonese during New Year's dinner. Right in the middle of all those other good things to eat is that little dish of salt fish.

Things have changed a lot since my grandmother's time. Many people then thought the Chinese ate strange things. There was a lot of misunderstanding because of that. The early Chinese fished for shrimp, crab, squid and shark. They collected abalone, seaweed and other seafood. Some people around here didn't think those foods were fit for eating. Actually, none of those foods were strange at all. It was just that people weren't used to eating them.

Today, you can go to any health food store and find all kinds of people buying seaweed, not just Chinese and Japanese. Seaweed has iodine in it, something that your body needs. Seafood restaurants are getting very popular with the public now and they are serving food that many people never used to eat, like abalone and squid. Even the scientists are trying to get food from the sea. They think that the oceans might be the "farms" of the future.

At one time, the fishing village here was very big, but it was burned in 1906. The Chinese were not allowed to rebuild in the same place. I guess that some people wanted to drive us out. Many families moved to the big cities, but some of us just moved to Seaside, where I was born. It's only a mile away from the town, so we still consider it part of Monterey.

I'm glad that attitudes change. I'm glad that people are a little more tolerant today than they were in those days because I consider Monterey my home. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else. The young kids, though, don't feel the same way I do about this place and I guess you can't really blame them. By the time they were born, Monterey as a fishing village had died out. There's still a few of us old-timers around and we keep in close touch. That's what I think the young kids might miss when they go to the big cities. No one knows who they are or looks after them. Here, there's always someone you can count on in case of trouble.

I'm just about the only one left here who dries fish for a living. My fish are sent all over the nation to Hawaii, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. If the young kids don't want to do the same things we did, that's all right. They should have more choices in life than we did. As for myself, I'm happy to be living here and making something that people enjoy. It keeps me busy and satisfied.

QUESTIONS

1. Bessie Lee's family
   a. had been in Monterey for a long time.
   b. were newcomers to the Monterey area.
   c. were farmers in the Monterey area.

2. In 1906 the Chinese left the fishing village in Monterey because
   a. it was burned.
   b. Seaside was a better location.
   c. the big cities were more exciting.

3. Bessie Lee's children left Monterey because
   a. they were forced to leave.
   b. the village was burned.
   c. they wanted to try other kinds of work.

4. People's food habits
   a. never change.
   b. depend on what people learn to like.
   c. are the same all over the world.

5. People's food habits can change
   a. when they are exposed to different foods and different people.
   b. only when they move to different countries.
   c. only when they grow up.

ACTIVITIES

1. Interview the students in your class. Find out their favorite foods and make a graph.

2. What is your favorite food? Imagine someone from another country eating it for the first time. Describe it from their point of view.

3. Do research on foods from the oceans.

4. Make a collage showing different kinds of seafood. Name some countries that depend on the sea for their food.

illustrated by Andrea Ja

A Separated Family

by Irene Dea Collier

Laws were passed in 1882 that made it difficult for Chinese men to re-enter the country or to bring their families to the United States. Although these laws were changed after World War II, they affected Chinese Americans for many years. The story is told by Lilly, the daughter in a separated family.

I come from a village of families with absent fathers. For the past 100 years, the men in our part of China have had to go far away to other countries to find work and support their families. My father first went to the United States when he was 12 years old, and my grandfather lived there for most of his adult life. I had seen the fathers of the village coming and going. You knew when a family had a returning father because people were laughing and visiting inside their house all the time. You could smell the good food cooking, see the children playing with their new toys and watch the fathers walking proudly around the village with their children.

When I was five years old, I asked my mother when it would be our turn to have our father visit us. She said, "It's not easy for these fathers to come back for a visit, Lilly. After they come here to visit us, it's often hard

for them to get back into the United States again. For many years, the place where your father is living needed strong men and boys to work there. But the laws didn't allow their families to join them. I don't know why the laws were like that.

"Your father was able to come back only once to marry me. He stayed a few years but had to leave again just before your little brother was born. He just couldn't find enough work in the village to support us. Your grandfather had to do the same thing when he was a young man. The laws are changing now, so someday we may be able to join them."

A year later, my mother told us that we were going to live with my father. I didn't know what to think because my father was only a shadowy figure in my life. He was a person who wrote letters to my mother, and although I had seen many pictures of him, he was still a stranger to me. My mother was glad to join him, but at the same time she was sad to leave home and go across the sea to live with someone she had not seen for many years.

We left the village and boarded an ocean liner in Hong Kong in 1952. The ship tossed on the rough ocean for two weeks and I was never so seasick and miserable in my life. I was relieved when we reached San Francisco.

The morning we docked was windy, bright and cold. We looked out from the deck of the ship at the people below and tried to find my father. My mother pointed out a man in a gray coat standing by a post and said, "That's your father."

The people at the customs house took a long time checking our suitcases. I was getting tired and confused because the building was so big and noisy. After a long wait, we finally met my father. I was glad that he looked just like his picture, only a little older. He had a nice smile and I felt that everything was going to be all right. My mother told me to hold his hand and I did. My brother was only five years old, and he clung to my mother and cried loudly.

The first few days in San Francisco were fine and we had a lot of fun getting to know each other. Big changes in our lives soon followed, however. To support us, both my mother and father had to work long hours. On his day off, my father would take us to the coffee shop and treat us to strawberry shortcake while he and his friends drank coffee. At night he sometimes took us to the family association.[1] Before we came to live with him, the association was the only place where he could go to relax with other people. He went every night because he had many friends there. I liked watching the adults playing mah-jong, smoking and laughing and having a good time.[2]

As we grew older, though, the distance between us also grew. We often saw fathers on television behaving very differently from our father. We began to forget that the fathers on television were just make-believe. We wanted our father to make a fuss over us and praise us too, just like the fathers on television did to their children. We were puzzled by the differences in behavior.

Also, those years of separation made it very difficult for us to be comfortable around each other. My father had grown up without much of a family life and it was hard for him to understand us. We had grown up where there were very few fathers and we didn't know how to act around him either, especially since we saw so little of him.

Now that I'm a mother myself, I know how hard it is to be a good parent. Only now can I fully appreciate what my parents did for us and see that my father took us to the coffee shops and the family association because he was proud of us and loved us.

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[1]family association--a place where Chinese people of the same surname can socialize.

[2]mah-jong--a Chinese game played with blocks and chips.

I often bring my daughter to my parents' house where she's treated like a little princess. When I see my father tossing my little girl in the air, I'm happy for them both. She is giving him the childhood that he missed with us and he is giving her the affection and love that she needs. For myself, I am sorry that we were not together to share in this very special time in our own lives.

QUESTIONS

1. The men left their village in China because
   a. there wasn't any work in the villages.
   b. they didn't want to take care of their families.
   c. they wanted to be by themselves.

2. They didn't take their families because
   a. they would be working all the time.
   b. there was no one to take care of them in the United States.
   c. the laws didn't allow wives and children to come into the country.

3. How did the father communicate with his family in China?
   a. He wrote letters.
   b. He returned home every year.
   c. He called them on the telephone.

4. How was the family able to live in China?
   a. They lived with their grandfather.
   b. The father worked overseas and sent money to them.
   c. They were rich and didn't have to worry about money.

5. The father really cared about the children because he
   a. fussed over them and praised them.
   b. behaved just like the fathers on television.
   c. worked hard so that the children could have food, clothes and a home.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. Imagine how it would feel to have part of your family (a parent, a brother, a sister) in another country, knowing that you might never see them again. How would you feel?

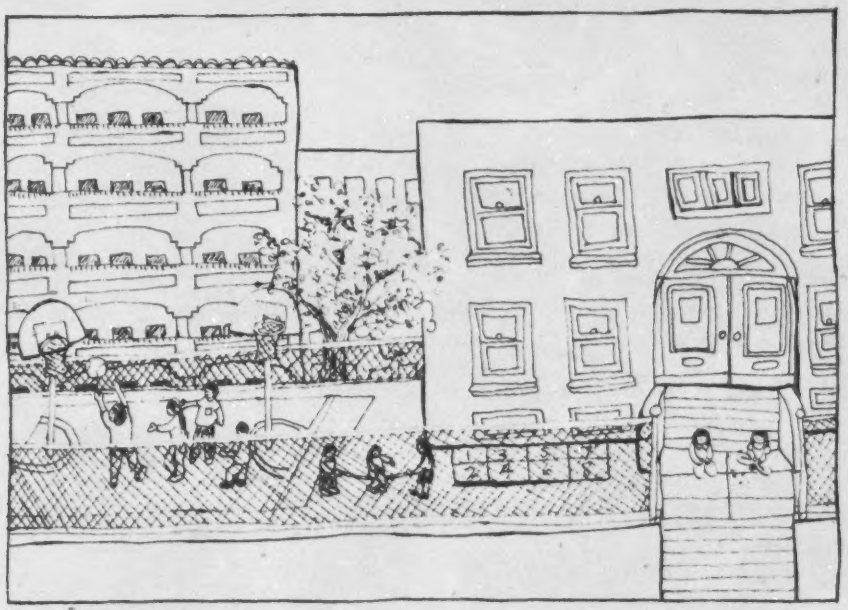
2. Watch a television show with a family in it. Are the people in it realistic? How are they like yours? How are they different from yours? How is your own family special?

Chinatown U.S.A.

by Don Wong

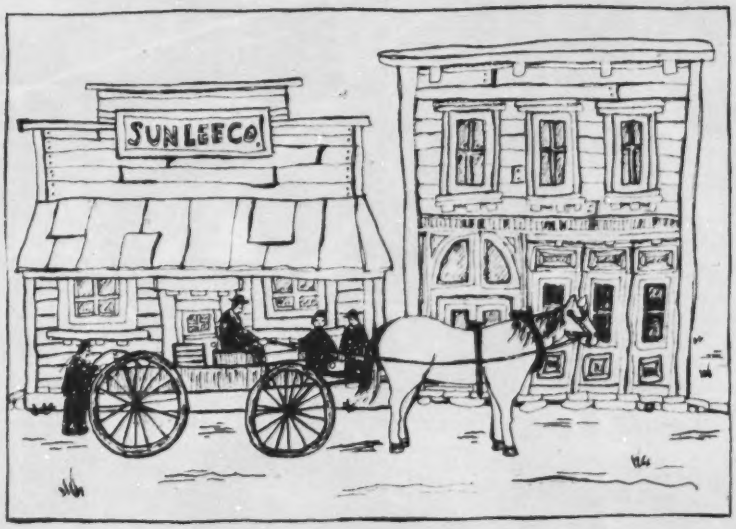
Throughout the United States, there are places called Chinatowns. In some cities, Chinatown is a row of stores on a street. In other cities, Chinatown covers many city blocks of buildings, stores, and restaurants. Visitors often go to Chinatown to eat Chinese food or to buy souvenirs in the shops.

illustrated by Linda Wong

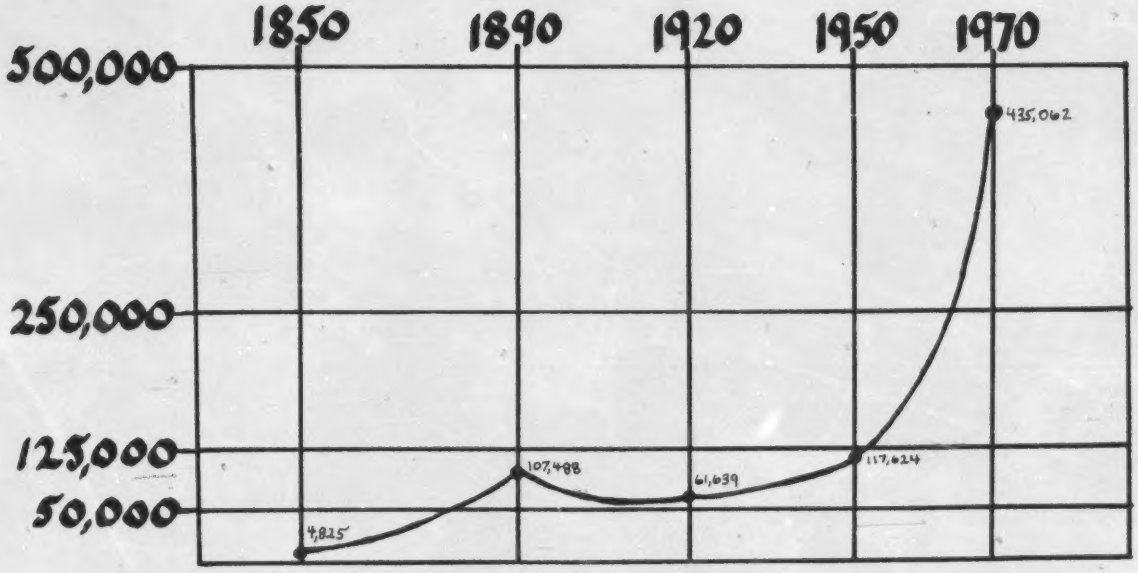


But there is more to Chinatown than flashing neon signs and pretty things for sale. There are schools, churches, playgrounds, apartment houses, and public housing projects. Chinatown is a place where people of all ages live, work, and play. For example, over 30,000 Chinese live in San Francisco's Chinatown. The Chinatowns of today have a history dating back over 120 years.

Chinatowns have been in America since the Chinese first arrived from China. From 1850 to 1882, thousands of Chinese came to America to make a better living. Wherever they went, Chinatowns sprang up. It was a place to go after working in the fields, mines, and on the railroads. The Chinese could talk with one another, eat Chinese food, and buy supplies there. Chinatowns were scattered all over the West in places like Butte, Montana and Marysville, California.



In the 1870's, the little Chinatowns in California, Nevada, and other states began to disappear when certain people started to force the Chinese to leave their towns. These people disliked the Chinese because they were different in the way they looked and talked. Workers thought the Chinese were taking their jobs away. Angry mobs chased the Chinese out of various towns and burned their stores and houses. In Tacoma, Washington, the townspeople shipped all the Chinese out on a train and burned Chinatown. Frightened Chinese fled from the countryside to large cities like San Francisco and New York. As long as they stayed in Chinatown, they were safe from people who wanted to hurt them.



After 1882, unfair immigration laws prevented the Chinese from coming to America. Those Chinese who went back to China were not allowed to return to America. Chinatown became a place for mostly single men. There were few Chinese families. In 1920, the Chinese population of America was 61,639 compared to 107,488 in 1890. In 1943, immigration laws were changed and the Chinese could enter America in small numbers.

Families began to move away from Chinatowns to the towns and cities all over the United States in the 1950's. The larger Chinatowns began to grow in the 1960's with the coming of the new immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The government changed laws allowing more Chinese to come to America in 1965. The new immigrants have settled in the Chinatowns of San Francisco, New York, and Los Angeles. They have come to America for many of the same reasons as the early immigrants did. The number of Chinese in America in 1970 was 435,000.

Now you can see why Chinatown U.S.A. is more than just a place to eat and shop.

QUESTIONS

1. Most people visit Chinatown to

   a. eat Chinese food and buy things.
   b. learn to speak Chinese.
   c. see Chinese movies.

2. Chinatowns sprang up in the West because

   a. it was too crowded in China.
   b. the Chinese could only run stores and restaurants.
   c. the Chinese needed places to talk with each other, eat, and buy supplies.

3. Chinatowns disappeared because

   a. the stores had no one to buy things.
   b. the Chinese became homesick.
   c. certain people forced the Chinese to leave their towns.

4. There were few Chinese families in the 1920's because

   a. laws stopped Chinese from coming to America.
   b. they moved outside of Chinatown.
   c. they refused to move from San Francisco.

5. Today more Chinese are able to come to America because

   a. the immigration laws were changed.
   b. airplanes and boats are faster.
   c. they can learn English faster.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. Chinatown is a special place in a city. Can you think of other neighborhoods where one group of people live together? For example, do the Spanish speaking people live in a certain part of the city? What are the reasons why they would gather in this neighborhood?

2. Do you think that life in Chinatown is like life in Hong Kong or China? How can you find out? Would libraries have this information? Or do you have to visit Chinatown and talk with the people to find out?

The Most Important People

by Irene Dea Collier

Illustrated by Donna Wong

This story is told by a twelve-year-old girl.

Do you know who the most important people in the world are?

No, they are not Presidents of the United States. They are not astronauts or scientists. The most important people in the world are parents.

My mother and father own a laundry. It's

called the Shining Star French Laundry.[1] I know we're not French, but that's just the name of the laundry. When my mom and dad took over the business in 1954, they never changed the name.

You may not know it, but operating a laundry is hard work. I've seen my uncle pick up the wet wash. If you've ever seen wet wash, you'll know that it weighs a ton. I've seen my dad repair the presses in our laundry. He has his tools scattered all over the floor like a mechanic. I know it's hard because he gets mad and uses words that my teacher says we shouldn't use in school. I've seen my mother do the bookkeeping and it looks real hard. I can add, subtract, multiply and divide--but I still can't understand how she does the books. So I know it takes strength and skill to operate a laundry. Most people don't realize this.

With all the skills that my mom and dad have, maybe they could have gotten other jobs. But they told me that at the time they got out of school, there weren't too many businesses that hired Chinese. The laundry was one of the few businesses that the Chinese could open themselves.

Sometimes they wish they had gone into some other line of work, especially now when the cost of water, soap and paper is going up higher and higher. But they never had the opportunity to try anything else. That's why I hope that there will be equal opportunity some day so that people can try other jobs to see how they like it.

Other times, though, they are glad to have their own business. My uncle was working as a cashier down by Fisherman's Wharf[2] for a while. He didn't like it too much, mainly because he had to work for someone else. He prefers to work for himself. That way, he won't have to have anyone telling him what to do.

It's not easy to run a laundry these days, my father says. My cousin says that it wasn't so easy to operate a laundry in the old days either. He goes to college and told me a lot of things about laundries that I never knew before.

My cousin said that in the gold rush days, the laundry was even more important than it is today. In those days, it cost so much to wash a shirt that many people bought new shirts rather than wash their old ones. I think it might have been fun--never having to worry about washing your clothes.

It cost too much to do it that way, though. When the Chinese first opened up laundries and charged $5.00 a dozen for washing shirts, they were an instant success. It was a business that was welcomed in the beginning because it was needed.

But then, my cousin said, this country had a depression. That's when there's not enough money to go around. People got scared that there wouldn't be enough jobs for them. So they blamed the Chinese and didn't want them to work any more. Some of them even burned down the Chinese laundries.

My cousin said that it always happens like that, even in other countries. When things get bad, people sometimes start to blame others for their troubles. I hope I will remember this so that if there ever is another depression, I won't go around blaming innocent people and burning down their houses.

But the story is not all sad. When a law was passed in San Francisco to make it hard for Chinese to own laundries, two laundrymen got mad and fought back by taking the case to court. They took the case all the way to the United States Supreme Court. And they won, too.

The Supreme Court said that everyone has to be treated equally under the law. My cousin said that this case[3] has been used to protect everyone's rights, not just Chinese. He said

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[1]French laundry--A steam laundry, once owned by French people.

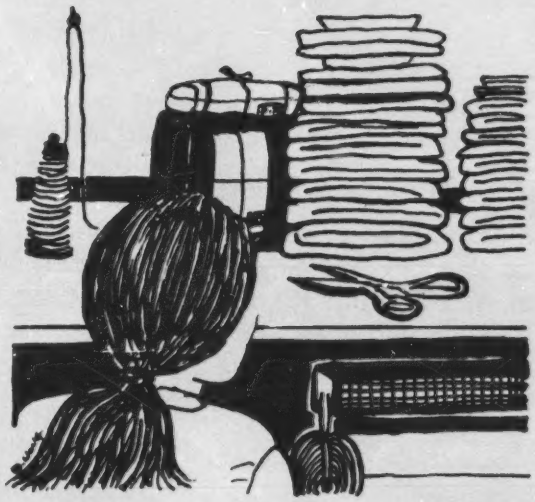
[2]Fisherman's Wharf--An area in San Francisco with many seafood restaurants.

[3]Yick Wo v. Hopkins, 1886.

these two laundrymen got one of the most important rulings in civil rights on the books. So, sometimes even ordinary people can have a big effect on a lot of people.

I am writing about laundries because I hope everyone will see that my parents' job is important, both now and in the old days. I also think that other parents' jobs are important too. What would happen if there were no bus drivers or cooks or doctors or teachers? Things would never get done!

Even though they'll never be famous or get any medals, our parents are helping our society run better. Some parents are not doing what they want to do, or what they are qualified to do. Still, they are trying their best to take care of their kids. That's why I think parents are the most important people in the world.



ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING TRUE OR FALSE

1.	Working in a laundry is easy.	True	False
2.	Sometimes the parents in the story wish they could have another job.	True	False
3.	The uncle in the story liked working for other people.	True	False
4.	In the days of the gold rush, laundries were important.	True	False
5.	It cost a lot to clean your shirts then.	True	False
6.	Some Chinese laundries were burned when the depression came.	True	False
7.	The Chinese took away other people's jobs.	True	False
8.	The Supreme Court said that everyone has to be treated equally under the law.	True	False
9.	All parents have jobs they like.	True	False
10.	All jobs are important to society.	True	False

ACTIVITY

1. Write a story with the title, "One day I woke up and found that there were no more _____ (firefighters, doctors, cooks, teachers, mothers, nurses, bus drivers, grocers)." What would happen in your story?

illustrated by Julie Wong

A Better Life for Us

by Don Wong

My name is Don Wong. I am 11 years old. This is my report for social studies. We were supposed to talk to an immigrant in America. I talked with Mr. Albert Woo. Here are some of the questions I asked him and his answers.

Don: When did you come to the U.S.?

Mr. Woo: We came to San Francisco on January 14,1973.

Don: How did you get here?

Mr. Woo: We flew on a jet airplane from Hong Kong. The trip took over 12 hours.

Don: Why did you come to America?

Mr. Woo: I brought my family to America because I wanted a better life for us. We left Hong Kong because it was overcrowded. There were too many people and not enough space to live. It was not easy to make a living. The wages were low. We didn't have enough money to send all the children to school. You have to pay for your children's education there. Only a few can go on to college in Hong Kong. In America, education is almost free for anybody who wants it. People told me that America is a better place for children to grow up.

Don: Mr.Woo, tell me about your family.

Mr. Woo: I have a wife and four children, two sons and two daughters.

Don: Tell me about your children. What are their names and ages?

Mr. Woo: Franklin is the oldest boy. He is 12 and is very smart in school. Louise is next; she is 10. She draws very well. Norman is 9. Amy is the youngest; she is almost 7. People are always telling me how pretty she is.

Don: Did you have any relatives here when you came to America?

Mr. Woo: I have a cousin. He helped us a lot when we got here. He helped us find a place to live.

Don: Where did you live?

Mr. Woo: We lived in Chinatown.

Don: Why there?

Mr. Woo: Living in Chinatown made us feel comfortable in the beginning. It reminded us of Hong Kong. It was easier for us to get around because everyone can speak Chinese. It's hard to start a new life in America. First you have to learn the language. It was harder for my wife and myself to learn English than our children. Finding a job and a place to live is not easy too.

Don: What kind of place did you live in?

Mr. Woo: It was small. We had two rooms and shared the kitchen and bathroom with other families in the building. We wanted to live at Ping Yuen, the low cost public housing in Chinatown. They charge lower rents for families that don't make much money. But they never have space. I know of families who waited over two years for space there.

Don: Where do you live now?

Mr. Woo: We moved to an apartment in the Richmond District of San Francisco. It is much larger than our place in Chinatown. We moved there last year.

Don: What kind of work did you find when you first came here?

Mr. Woo: They were mostly low paying jobs in Chinatown. I worked as a dishwasher for $1.35 an hour. I looked outside of Chinatown but no one wanted to hire me because I can't speak English so well. Now I work as a night janitor in a bank. A group called Chinese for Affirmative Action helped me find that job. It is better than the jobs in Chinatown. It pays more. My wife also works. She sews clothes in a garment factory.

Don: Are you glad that you came to America?

Mr. Woo Yes, I am glad that we came. We were taking a big chance coming to America. We came with very little to start a new life in America. Our clothes and a few things were all we brought. In the beginning, things were rough. But someday with luck, I will have my own business. I want to open a shoe store. That's what I did in Hong Kong. Besides, I don't mind working for my children's future. I make them study hard so that they will go to college and make a good living.

QUESTIONS

1. Mr. Woo and his family are immigrants from
   a. Hong Kong.
   b. China.
   c. Peking.

2. Why did Mr. Woo have to live in Chinatown?
   a. All his friends lived there.
   b. It cost less to live there.
   c. He felt more comfortable in Chinatown.

3. Mr. Woo said that he couldn't find work outside of Chinatown because
   a. no one wanted to hire him because of his poor English.
   b. Mr. Woo was not strong enough to work.
   c. there were no jobs.

4. What kind of work did Mr. Woo find?
   a. Mostly low paying jobs in Chinatown.
   b. Work at the big hotels.
   c. He ran a plastics factory.

5. What was Mr. Woo's reason for coming to America?
   a. He wanted a better life for his family.
   b. Things were bad in China.
   c. He thought that he could get rich here.

6. Was Mr. Woo happy that he came to America?
   a. No. He was homesick for Hong Kong.
   b. Yes. He was making a lot of money to buy a new house.
   c. Yes. He said things were rough but life was better for his children.

ACTIVITIES

1. Interview an immigrant. It could be a classmate or someone else you know. Some questions that you can ask are: Why did you come to America? When did you come? What are some things that you like about America? After the interview, write a report about your conversation with an immigrant.

2. The forefathers of most people in America are from other countries. For a class project, try to find out the countries that your classmates are originally from. On a world map, mark these countries and your city. Draw lines from these countries to your city.

3. Close your eyes, pretend you are leaving America and moving to Japan. Think about all the things that will be different for you and your family. Describe what may or will happen to you in Japan. (For example, where will you live? Where will you go to school?)

I'm a Hero, Too

by Irene Dea Collier

illustrated by Calvin Chan

"Oh boy!" thought Georgie Chan as he flipped through the pages of his latest comic book. He loved to see his comic book heroes dashing around in colorful costumes. He wished he had a magic ring, or a magic belt, or some magical powers that would make him famous and let him become a hero.

Georgie's thoughts were interrupted by the sound of his baby brother, James, crying in the next room. Georgie sighed and put down the comic book. He warmed up a bottle of milk and picked up the baby. Georgie was only eight years old but he already knew how to take care of his baby brother.

As the baby gurgled on the bottle, Georgie thought about how he could become an important person. His school work was all right, but his teacher said that he was too playful and daydreamed too much. He was always careful not to get into trouble or he might have to stay after school. Then his father would be late for work because there would be no one to take care of his sister Cathy and his baby brother.

The baby fell asleep again, sucking his fingers. Georgie looked through the window at the sky and imagined all his heroes flashing and dashing around. Something caught his eye on the fire escape. He opened the window and leaned out. It was a ring! Disappointed, he saw that it was just an old bubble gum machine ring. But he pretended it was a magic ring and put it on his finger anyway. "Fly!" he commanded.

Suddenly, he was up in the sky, flying around! Imagine him, Georgie Chan, flying around like his comic book heroes. It was great! He swooped up, down and around the street lights and laughed and laughed. "I

should go to see the world," he thought. "This is my big chance." There was one small problem. He didn't know anyone else in the world ... except his grandmother. Yes, he would visit his grandmother.

"First, I'd better say good-bye to my mother and father," he thought. He flew over to the restaurant where his father worked and found him in the kitchen washing dishes. Georgie was surprised to see how tired his father looked. He was so unlike the smiling man at home who joked with them and took care of them. Georgie didn't know what to say. He couldn't understand why nobody paid attention to him. He realized that he was invisible.

Then something strange happened. As the soap suds fell from his father's hands they turned into tinkling dimes. The owner of the restaurant smiled and took the dimes away in gray bucket. Georgie blinked and the soap suds in the sink turned into ordinary bubbles again. "Goodbye," he yelled, hoping that his father could somehow hear him. "I'm off to see the world."

Georgie hurried over to his mother's factory. Strange things were happening there too. The women were sewing ordinary clothes, but when they were pressed and hung, the clothes turned into gold! Everyone was too busy talking and working to notice. A man came in and took the clothes away in a van. His mother was talking with the other women in the shop. "Georgie's a good boy. He takes care of his brother and sister until I get home at night. I don't know what we'd do without him."

For a few seconds, Georgie didn't know what to do. Should he go? Who would take care of Cathy and James? He hurried to kiss his mother on the cheek and ran out the door before he could change his mind.

He flew over mountains and water. He had no idea where his grandmother lived, but he trusted the magic ring to take him there. And it did.

He knocked on the door of the apartment house. A voice called out, "Who's there?" "It's me, Georgie," he yelled. "I'm your grandson." An old lady opened the door. She didn't ask how he got there or why he was there. She just told him to come in and gave him some

cookies and soft drinks.

Georgie was afraid that he couldn't talk to her. He had forgotten most of his Chinese since he started school, but the magic ring was truly magic. He found the Chinese words slipping out of his mouth like they did when he was a little boy. "I'm off to see the world and become a hero like in the comics," Georgie explained. "But first, I want to ask if you could come to live with us and take care of Cathy and James."

"I don't know, Georgie," Grandma said. "I'm too old to start life all over again and my friends are all here."

"Please come," Georgie said. "It would mean a lot to my parents and it would especially mean a lot to me. I want to do great things and become a hero. But I have to take care of James and Cathy so I never get to go anywhere."

"Being a hero is more than doing great things. What is a hero, Georgie?" Grandma asked. "Isn't he someone who can help people when they need help? Doesn't he do things that are hard to do? You're doing something that's not easy--taking care of your brother and sister. Sometimes what you are doing is a lot harder for you than it is for one of your comic book heroes to save lives. If you're strong and have magic powers, it's easy to do wonderful things. But if you're just a little boy with no magic powers, sometimes doing very ordinary things is heroic."

"But I'm not a very good hero," Georgie protested. "Sometimes I get mad at Cathy and sock her. Sometimes I let the baby cry a while before I pick him up. Sometimes I get so mad, I yell at them. We need someone to take care of them better than I can."

"I'll think about it, Georgie," Grandma promised.

"Okay, Grandma," Georgie said, a little disappointed.

"Where should I go next?" he wondered. Suddenly, he remembered that he had left the window open at home. Oh, no! James would catch cold! Georgie jumped into the sky and swam through the air, kicking his legs so he could fly faster and faster. Finally, he found himself in his own house, looking out at the sky and the drizzling rain.

Had he really flown far away and seen and done all those wonderful things? Maybe it was all just a daydream. He looked down at the ring on his finger and slipped it off. He placed the ring back on the fire escape and closed the window. He turned and was glad to find James snoring in the crib. Georgie kissed his baby brother's soft hair and went out into the living room.

Cathy was sleeping on the sofa and Georgie covered her with a blanket. Magic powers or not, he was glad to be home again. What if there was nobody to take care of James and Cathy? Even if he got angry with them sometimes, Georgie realized that he was an important person to his family.

"Hey, Cathy," he whispered. "I'm a hero, too." Then he went to sleep at the other end of the sofa.

QUESTIONS

1. Georgie wanted to become a hero because
   a. he wanted a colorful costume.
   b. he wanted to see his grandmother.
   c. he wanted to be important.

2. In school, Georgie was
   a. the best student.
   b. the most popular boy.
   c. too playful and daydreamed too much.

3. Grandmother wasn't too sure that she wanted to live in San Francisco because
   a. she was old and it was hard to start a new life.
   b. she didn't want to take care of James and Cathy.
   c. she didn't want Georgie to become a hero.

4. Grandmother thought that heroes
   a. had magic powers and did amazing things.
   b. were sometimes ordinary people doing very ordinary things.
   c. were only found in comic books.

5. In the end, Georgie thought he was a hero because
   a. he flew home so fast.
   b. he was important to his family.
   c. Cathy was glad to see him again.

ACTIVITIES

1. Was Georgie a hero? What is a hero? Was his father a hero? Was his mother a heroine? Illustrate scenes from the story.

2. Can you think of other everyday heroes? Draw a picture of them and write about what makes them heroic.

Bobby's News Report

by Irene Dea Collier

In the past, the Chinese have protested anti-Chinese laws and unfair treatment by taking their cases to court. One of the most important cases is Lau v. Nichols, which came about when 13 Chinese students and their parents sued the San Francisco schools for not giving them the help they needed in school. Many bilingual and intensive English classes were formed as a result of this court case.

illustrated by Donna Wong

Bobby sat on the concrete steps and played with the strings of his delivery newsbag. The truck driver was late bringing the newspapers today. Bobby was getting impatient because he needed an article for his school news report tomorrow. Bobby looked down the street and was surprised to see his cousin Norman who had just returned from working out of the state.

"Hi, Bobby, How are you?"

"Fine. It's good to have you home again, Norman," said Bobby.

"Thanks, Bobby. It feels good to be home again. Things have changed a lot in five years."

"Really?" asked Bobby.

"Sure," said Norman. "The other day, I went to my favorite soda fountain in Chinatown and it was gone! There was a fish market there instead. I was surprised because I thought that the place would always be there. When I was a kid, we used to go there all the time. They served all kinds of food--waffles, doughnuts, moon cakes, pies, pork buns, almond cookies, hamburgers and milkshakes. All kinds of people used to go there--tough teenagers, businessmen, storekeepers and even little kids. It was always noisy and crowded. People used to go there to drink coffee and socialize every day.

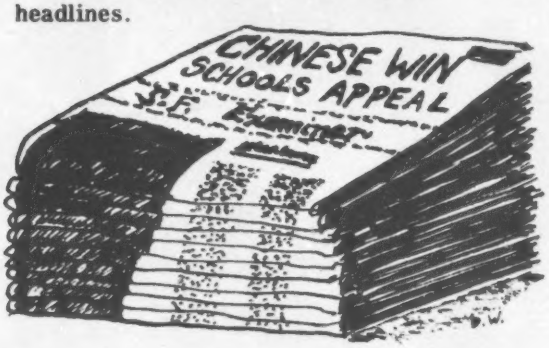
"There are many newer coffee shops now but it's somehow not the same. They still serve cakes and pies but I couldn't recognize half of the food on the menu. I didn't know how to order in Chinese so I felt a little bit like a tourist. Even though the waiters understood English, I still felt funny asking them about the menu.

"Then I went and walked around. I saw a lot of Chinese bookstores with people of all ages standing around--young kids reading comic books, teenagers reading short novels and adults reading thick books. Magazines and books were piled up everywhere. I realized then that I couldn't read a single word of Chinese. I felt sort of shut out. When you're a kid, you think that things never change. You take it for granted that you'll always understand the people and places you grew up

with. Then, suddenly, everything changes and you don't understand any of it."

Bobby said, "I notice the changes on my paper route too. People in Chinatown read the English papers but there's quite a few more Chinese newspapers around now. You can see old men selling them on the street corners and you can see a lot of people buying them. Hey, here comes the newspaper truck."

The red and white van swung into view and moved quickly down the street. The truck driver unloaded the newspapers and Bobby picked up the top paper. He was surprised to see "S.F. Chinese Win Schools Appeal" in the headlines.



"What's this, Norman?" he asked. "I need an article for my news report tomorrow but I can't understand all the words in it."

Norman quickly read the article. "It says that some Chinese parents sued the San Francisco schools for not giving their kids the help they needed in school. The Supreme Court said that giving non-English speaking kids the same books as everyone else was not the same as giving them an equal education. Schools have to give children the kind of help they need."

Bobby remembered those first few years in school when he really needed help. He colored pictures of little girls and lambs, banged on tambourines and moved his lips to songs he didn't know. Those first few years in school didn't make any sense at all because he didn't understand English.

"What kind of help are they talking about?" asked Bobby.

"Well, the court really didn't say. Schools have to make that decision. Some people want more English classes for longer periods during the day. But other people might try teaching in both English and the home language so that a child could go ahead and learn other subjects while he learns English. This is called bilingual education. I remember reading an article a few years ago by the United Nation's education organization. It said that children learn better when they continue to learn in their home language."

"Wouldn't it be too hard for kids to learn in two languages?" asked Bobby.

"I don't think so." said Norman. "In Latin America, Africa and Europe, children often learn two or three languages without any problems."

"What use would learning Chinese be?" asked Bobby. 'We're Americans now, aren't we?"

"Sure, we're Americans. But what do you mean by being American? You know, America is made up of people who speak many languages other than English. You don't have to speak just English to be an American. In fact, this article says that over five million children in America start school with another language. You can't say that they're not Americans until they learn English.

"Besides, the more languages you know, the better you'll be able to understand change. You wouldn't feel so shut out because you can get people to explain things to you."

"I know what you mean," said Bobby. "If I kept learning Chinese, it would help out a lot at home. My parents don't speak much English and I've forgotten most of my Chinese since I started school. It feels strange to talk to them in English and they answer me in Chinese."

Norman said, "It gets harder as you grow up too. It's not so bad when you're little and what you have to say to each other is simple, but when you grow up, you'll want to talk about more complicated things. I can't really talk to my parents any more. I ran across a lot of other people at work who have the same

problem communicating with their parents. Their families speak German, Portuguese, Russian or Italian but the kids can't speak anything but English. It's really sad that we can't find out what our parents think or feel."

"Well," Bobby said, "maybe the kids will get the help they need in school so that they won't lose their home language or feel bad about speaking it."

"I hope that will happen," said Norman. "We could learn a lot from each other that way. Well, I better go inside to say hello to your parents."

"See you later, Norman." said Bobby. "Thanks for helping me with my news report."

QUESTIONS

1. During the first two years in school
   a. Bobby was very happy.
   b. Bobby didn't understand what was going on.
   c. Bobby had a very easy time at school.

2. Some schools are trying to help non-English speaking children by
   a. teaching more English for longer periods.
   b. using the same books as everyone else.
   c. helping the parents to learn English.

3. Other schools are trying to help non-English speaking children by
   a. building new schools.
   b. opening Chinese classes after school.
   c. teaching in both the home language and English.

4. Americans are
   a. only those who speak English well.
   b. only those who speak languages other than English.
   c. many different kinds of people with many different languages.

5. The Lau v. Nichols court case affects
   a. only Chinese American children.
   b. all children who speak another language besides English.
   c. only a few children in the United States.

ACTIVITIES

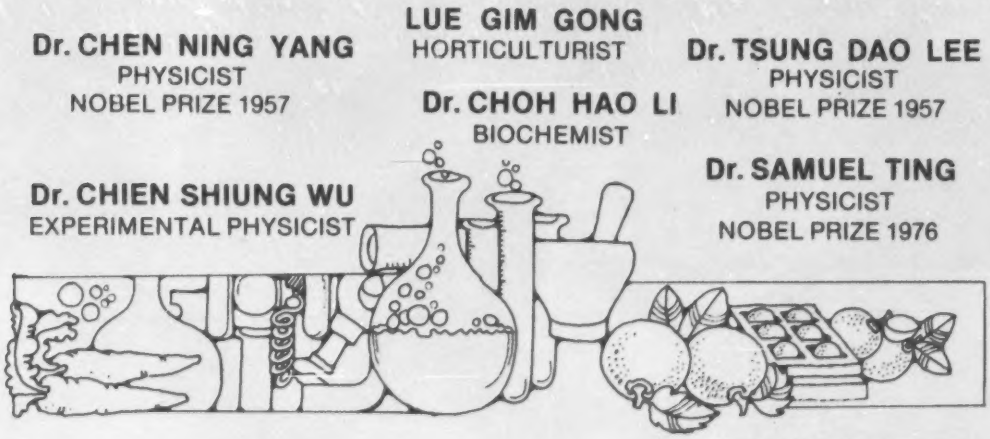
1. Count how many languages other than English are spoken by the students and their families in your classroom. Make a chart of these languages.

2. Have you ever been in a place where you did not understand the language being spoken? How did it make you feel? Write down your feelings.

What Do Chinese Americans Do Today?

by Irene Dea Collier

The Chinese in America have done much in the past to build this country. What do they do today?



illustrated by Ottip Ramos

THE CHINESE IN SCIENCE

The Chinese in America have made many important discoveries. Chinese farmers in California were the first to find ways to grow celery for the market place in 1891. The first aircraft in the West was built and flown by a Chinese man in 1909. In 1911, a Chinese plant scientist won a silver medal for developing a special breed of orange that can be grown all year long. In 1952, a Chinese farmer designed a carrot picking machine that could do the work of 100 men. In 1957 and again in 1976, Chinese scientists living in America won the Nobel Prize in Physics, one of the highest awards in the field.

Today, there are many Chinese Americans who are doing scientific research in colleges and hospitals all over the United States. They are helping to make new discoveries in chemistry, cancer research and other important areas of science.

THE CHINESE IN BUSINESS

For the past 100 years, the Chinese have been merchants in countries all over the world. In many countries, it was the only kind of work they were permitted to do. During the gold rush, Chinese merchants opened stores throughout the American West. Today, there are many Chinese American bankers and store owners; a few Chinese American businessmen are millionaires.

THE CHINESE AS WORKERS

It was this group of people who made the most remarkable achievements in Chinese American history. In the past, when human strength and skill was needed for many jobs now done by machines, Chinese workers built railroads, filled

swamplands, and harvested crops. Today, Chinese American workers do many types of work in the cities. They work as truck drivers, restaurant workers, mechanics, garment workers, household helpers, plumbers, repairmen, carpenters, and sales clerks.

SAMUEL YEE
MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE
SAN FRANCISCO

MARCH FONG EU
CALIFORNIA
SECRETARY OF STATE

WILLIAM D. SOO HOO
MAYOR
OXNARD, CALIFORNIA

HARRY LOW
SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE
SAN FRANCISCO

WING F. ONG
ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATOR

TOM TANG
SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE
MARICOPA COUNTY
ARIZONA

HIRAM FONG
RETIRED U. S. SENATOR

YING LEE KELLEY
CITY COUNCIL MEMBER
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

WING LUKE
CITY COUNCIL
SEATTLE

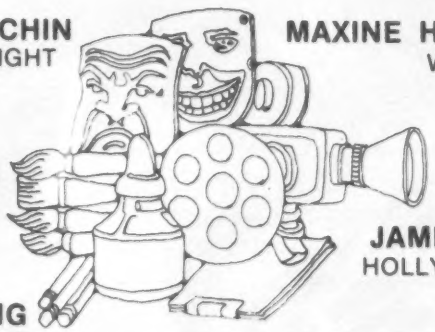
THE CHINESE IN LAW

Many times in the past, the Chinese have tested unfair laws in the courts. Often their victories have strengthed the United States Constitution in the areas of citizenship, education and civil rights. Many court cases have been fought by ordinary citizens defending their rights. Today there are Chinese American police officers, lawyers, judges, city council members, mayors, a retired U.S. Senator and a California Secretary of State.

FRANK CHIN
PLAYWRIGHT

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON
WRITER

DONG KINGMAN
ARTIST



JAMES WONG HOWE
HOLLYWOOD CAMERAMAN

JADE SNOW WONG
WRITER AND CERAMIST

LAURENCE YEP
WRITER, CHILDREN'S BOOKS

THE CHINESE AS ARTISTS

Artists are important because they help us to see objects and events in a new and different way. There have been a few famous Chinese Americans in art. In addition to these famous men and women, there are many more struggling artists whose works are still to be discovered and recognized by society.

THE CHINESE AS PROFESSIONALS

Chinese Americans work as teachers, principals, dentist, doctors, nurses, college professors, engineers, social workers and psychologists. Their road was not always an easy one. For many years, it was difficult for the Chinese to enter some of these fields, although many had the desire, ability and training. Many of the occupations listed have been opened to Chinese Americans only since the 1950's.

THE CHINESE IN OTHER FIELDS

Chinese Americans have achieved success in other fields as well. A Chinese architect designed the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library in Boston, Massachusetts. There are some well-known Chinese dress and jewelry designers. In sports, Chinese Americans have made their mark in boxing, fencing, skiing, tennis, and baseball. There have been a few Chinese American actors and actresses, but their roles have been limited in the past. As better roles are written, their numbers will increase.

SUMMARY

Chinese Americans work in almost every kind of job you can imagine. However, there are still some occupations where the numbers of Chinese Americans are very small. These include the building trades, fire fighting, the airline industry and the military. Many times, this is due to the lack of opportunity rather than lack of ability. In the past, certain job requirements, such as weight and height, have shut the Chinese out of occupations. Today, many of these job requirements are considered unnecessary, or have been changed. Hopefully, these changes will make it possible for citizens to find jobs that do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex or age.

Like many other groups, Chinese Americans are helping to build this country with the work that they do. As opportunities increase, Chinese Americans will have an even greater effect on this country, both as individuals and as a group.

QUESTIONS

1. Awards won by Chinese scientists in America
   a. were not very important.
   b. were among the highest awards in the field.
   c. were given over 50 years ago.

2. Chinese American workers
   a. have been unimportant to the development of this country.
   b. have made the most remarkable achievements in Chinese American history.
   c. are still mostly farmers and railroad workers.

3. Chinese American achievements in law have been made by
   a. both ordinary citizens and famous politicians.
   b. only ordinary citizens.
   c. only famous politicians.

4. Chinese American professionals
   a. were always easily accepted.
   b. sometimes had a hard time finding work.
   c. only work in a few occupations today.

5. Some fields had few Chinese Americans because
   a. Chinese Americans did not have enough ability.
   b. Chinese Americans did not have equal opportunity.
   c. Chinese Americans had enough jobs in other fields.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. How important is it to be famous? Do you know someone who is famous? Were the achievements of Chinese Americans only made by important and famous people?

2. Certain job requirements have kept groups of people (racial minorities, women, the elderly, the handicapped) out of some occupations. How important were these job requirements, for example?
   a. Do police officers have to be tall ?
   b. Do bus drivers have to be men?
   c. Do teachers have to be women?
   d. Do actors and actresses have to be young?
   e. Do newscasters have to sound the same? Compare Walter Cronkite, Bill Moyers, Fred Grahame, Connie Chung, Barbara Walters, Sam Chu Lin.

ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS

Why Did the Chinese Leave China?
1-a, 2-d, 3-c, 4-c, 5-b

A Chinese Miner's Letter
1-b, 2-c, 3-b, 4-b, 5-b, 6-c

A Bone Collector's Story
1-b, 2-a, 3-b, 4-c, 5-c

The Chinese: Railroad Builders of the West
1-c, 2-c, 3-c, 4-b, 5-a

Chinese Workers Stand Up for Their Rights
1-a, 2-a, 3-b, 4-b

A Morning Among the Tules
1-a, 2-b, 3-b, 4-c, 5-b, 6-c

The Early Chinese in the Cities
1-a, 2-b, 3-a, 4-c, 5-c

The World on Your Shoulders
1-a, 2-b, 3-a, 4-a, 5-a, 6-b

No. 127, San Francisco Okay
1-c, 2-c, 3-a, 4-a, 5-b

The Travels of George Wong
1-a, 2-a, 3-c, 4-a, 5-a, 6-a 7-b

Ben's Way
1-b, 2-c, 3-a, 4-a

Billy's Big Day
1-a, 2-b, 3-c, 4-a, 5-b, 6-a

Bessie Lee, a Native of Monterey
1-a, 2-a, 3-c, 4-b, 5-a

A Separated Family
1-a, 2-c, 3-a, 4-b, 5-c

Chinatown U.S.A.
1-a, 2-c, 3-c, 4-a, 5-a

The Most Important People
1 False, 2 True, 3 False, 4 True
5 True, 6 True, 7 False, 8 True
9 False, 10 True

A Better Life for Us
1-a, 2-c, 3-a, 4-a, 5-a, 6-c

I'm a Hero, Too
1-c, 2-c, 3-a, 4-b, 5-b

Bobby's News Report
1-b, 2-a, 3-c, 4-c, 5-b

What Do Chinese Americans Do Today?
1-b, 2-b, 3-a, 4-b, 5-b

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